

THE STRAITS TIMES

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(From far right)
Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong and Manpower Minister Josephine Teo chatting with career coach Noralizah Aziz, assistant staff nurse Suriana Sarip and her employer, Dr Ng Yew Yee. Ms Suriana was an administrative assistant who took a Nitec course in nursing and found a job at Healthway Medical Corp. ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG



Plans in place to help workers to train, take on new jobs: PM

Amid anxiety over jobs and the state of the economy, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's message to Singaporeans is that resources and the resolve are in place to help them train and take on new jobs.

The journey is not easy, and many people are anxious and might worry about their career prospects, job security and families, he said. Older people may be more worried about new technology, he noted.

"We have the resources, the plans and the resolve. We will help everybody to get through difficulties. We will help you, walk together with you, to overcome these troubles," he said on a visit to Workforce Singapore's Careers Connect at Lifelong Learning Institute in Paya Lebar. It lets jobseekers meet career coaches and tap a wide range of resources.

Yesterday, PM Lee met workers

who had changed or were changing jobs, employers and career coaches, and spoke to them about their experiences for around 2½ hours.

"A lot of good work is done, there is a lot of passion," he told reporters at the end of his visit, adding that Singaporeans should have confidence that they can cope with economic transformation.

Singapore has made a lot of progress in its restructuring journey, he noted, citing how employment rates have gone up, particularly for women and the elderly.

The journey is not over, he said. But if it is done right, in 10 years, Singaporeans will be in a better position than they are today, he said.

Joanna Seow

SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A6

Ex-offenders to get more help to reintegrate in society

New strategy includes focusing more on correctional schemes targeted at individuals

Tan Tam Mei

To better rehabilitate former offenders, the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) will look into assigning inmates the same case officer – when possible – from the start of their sentence until they are fully integrated into the community.

This is part of a three-pronged approach announced yesterday by

Minister for Home Affairs and Law K. Shanmugam. The other two are: To focus more on correctional programmes targeted at the individual, and to get more family and community support.

Mr Shanmugam unveiled the strategy when he visited the new Selarang Halfway House in Changi, the first such government-run facility here. It plays a crucial role in the national effort. "This has been a key

part of our thinking so that they do not come back to the prison," he said in a speech at the facility.

"A lot of things have been done over the years, and this is a further big step in that process. So, we try to make the environment conducive for rehabilitation and reintegration, but still secure."

The correctional programmes SPS is exploring, he said, include using psychology and data to assess the needs of each offender and tailoring them to suit the person.

Also, with digital technology, counselling sessions can be done via video-conferencing, he added.

A mobile app is also being developed for former offenders in the move to achieve "better end-to-end oversight of the inmate's journey through prisons", said Mr Shanmugam. The app will have self-help resources and a job database.

To leverage family support, trained facilitators will guide all newly admitted offenders on how to interact with their loved ones.

The Government also wants to make it a legal requirement for the family of youth drug abusers to attend counselling sessions.

Selarang Halfway House moved to its new site in Upper Changi

Road North last November. It will be part of the larger Selarang Park Complex, which will include a Drug Rehabilitation Centre, Work Release Centre and Community Supervision Centre. The complex will be ready next year.

The halfway house has a few firsts to its name, including being the biggest in Singapore.

It has room for more than 570 residents, though it now accommodates 138 former offenders. In the past two years, it was in Cosford Road and housed about 350 residents.

Selarang is also the only one among nine halfway houses here that is for both men and women.

Selarang's deputy executive director Elijah Teo said that by providing a conducive and rehabilitative environment at the halfway house, "we hope to help residents break away from their cycle of reoffending".

Mr Shanmugam also spoke about proposed changes to the Misuse of Drugs Act that will be debated in Parliament next week. If passed, repeat abusers who do not commit other kinds of crimes will be given

intensive rehabilitation, not long jail sentences.

He said: "We have studied the evidence very carefully, and we think we can do more on the rehabilitation side and maybe relook at whether we really need long-term imprisonment for these 'pure' drug abusers."

Another proposed change is a longer supervision period post-release, which is now up to two years.

Mr Shanmugam noted that the relapse rate for former drug abusers is "nearly one in two" in the fifth year of release. "So, a longer supervision period – five years – will hopefully help us help them."

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SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A8

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10 must-reads for today

1 Heavy snowfall in Europe
At least seven people have died after heavy snowfall blanketed parts of Europe, with the deluge of snow paralysing travel and tourism. Several regions in Austria and Germany have declared states of emergency as some roads, railways and ski resorts were closed due to the snow. **WORLD A14**

2 Help for former inmates
The same case officer will be assigned to prison inmates from the beginning of their sentence until they are fully integrated into the community after their release, as part of efforts to help former offenders reintegrate. **TOP OF THE NEWS A1**

3 Focus on ties with Malaysia
Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan is scheduled to deliver a ministerial statement on relations between Singapore and Malaysia when Parliament sits on Monday. **TOP OF THE NEWS A4**

4 Trade pact still attractive
The United States and China are highly unlikely to seek to be part of the Pacific Rim trade deal, said a panel of experts. Despite this, the pact will continue to attract interested entrants. **WORLD A18**



Workers clearing a roof in the town of Gerold, in Germany, following heavy snowfall. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

5 Cost analysis a useful tool
From assessing air quality to determining the value of damages in lawsuits, cost-benefit analysis provides a framework that can also guide policymaking, says economics professor Euston Quah of Nanyang Technological University. **OPINION A40**

6 Dispute over Tengah report
The findings of an environmental study on Tengah commissioned by the Housing Board have been disputed by ecologists and naturalists, who now want the full report made public. But it appears that the HDB has no intention to release the report. **HOME B2**

7 Ex-wife to get \$6 million
A man has to pay his former wife \$6 million after the Court of Appeal allowed his appeal in part to reduce the value of total matrimonial assets to \$35 million in their divorce settlement. It upheld a High Court judge's decision that the couple's total matrimonial assets should be divided 67:33 in favour of the husband. **HOME B10**

8 Manufacturing 'still vital'
Manufacturing will remain a key part of Singapore's economy, although it will encounter greater disruption in the years ahead, said Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing. **BUSINESS C1**

9 OCBC Cycle goes greener
Early birds who queued for up to 22 hours at the launch of this year's OCBC Cycle were rewarded with gifts such as Aleoca mountain bikes and cameras. And among the new steps the organisers are taking for the environment is to plant one tree for every 50 cyclists. **SPORT C10**

10 Largest Don Don Donki
The third and largest outlet of Japanese discount chain Don Don Donki opened yesterday at City Square Mall. The 26,000 sq ft space features a wider selection of Japanese cuisine, a foodcourt and a bargain section. **LIFE D7**

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VIDEO
Careful urban planning
Every development in Singapore – from housing to transport infrastructure – happens through careful planning. Find out what goes into the design of Singapore's urban landscape. <http://str.sg/urbandesign>



WEB SPECIAL
Who is MacKenzie Bezos?
Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, the world's richest man, is divorcing his wife MacKenzie after 25 years of marriage. Here are eight things you should know about her. <http://str.sg/mackenzie>

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Singapore-Malaysia ties key focus of first Parliament sitting in 2019

Linette Lai
Political Correspondent

Relations between Singapore and Malaysia will be a key focus of discussion at the first Parliament sitting of the year on Monday, when Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan is scheduled to deliver a ministerial statement.

Seven MPs and two Nominated MPs have also filed questions on the ongoing disputes over airspace and maritime boundaries, according to the agenda on the sitting issued by the Clerk of Parliament yesterday.

Besides asking for updates on the situation, they want to know what Singapore's plans are.

In a joint declaration after a meeting in Singapore on Tuesday, Dr Bal-

akrishnan and his Malaysian counterpart Saifuddin Abdullah stressed the need to keep the situation on the ground calm to allow discussions to take place.

The foreign ministers also said that their countries' transport ministers would meet soon for discussions "to ensure the safety and efficiency of civil aviation".

On maritime issues, the ministers said a working group will be set up to discuss the legal and operational matters in order to de-escalate the situation on the ground, and provide a basis for further discussions and negotiations.

However, a day after the meeting, Johor Menteri Besar Osman Sapian posted on his Facebook page about his visit to a Malaysian government vessel anchored in Singapore waters off Tuas.

The Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) said on Thursday that there were five Malaysian government vessels in Singapore's waters as of 6pm on Wednesday.

It also confirmed that two vessels remained in Singapore waters as of 6pm on Thursday.

Other issues that will be raised at Monday's Parliament sitting include questions on safety lapses at Tan Tock Seng Hospital's dental clinic as well as the recent High Court decision allowing a gay man to adopt his biological son who was born via surrogacy in the United States.

MPs have also filed questions on what measures Singapore has in place or will take to prevent drones from disrupting air traffic, after drone sightings at Gatwick Airport near London caused hundreds of cancelled flights last month.

Several want to know whether the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources can do more to prevent food poisoning outbreaks, after a spate of high-profile incidents in November and December last year.

The House will also debate six Bills, while three others will be introduced.

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Firefly suspended operations to Singapore from Dec 1, saying that it did not have approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia to make the move from Changi Airport to Seletar Airport, where a new terminal had been built to handle turboprop flights.
PHOTOS: SHIN MIN DAILY NEWS, ST FILE



Firefly losing up to \$6.6m each month from flight suspension

KUALA LUMPUR • Malaysian carrier Firefly is projected to incur monthly losses of up to RM20 million (\$6.6 million) due to the suspension of its direct flights to Singapore from Kuala Lumpur, a top official said, following the airspace dispute between Malaysia and the Republic.

"The exposure, the revenue lost (from the suspension) is RM15 million, so we are looking at RM15 million to RM20 million revenue lost on a monthly basis," Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) chief executive Izham Ismail told The Malaysian Insight news site.

"Firefly has been doing well over the past three years, so this is a huge dent to the group," he added.

MAG, a 100 per cent owned unit of Malaysia's sovereign fund Khazanah Nasional, owns both national carrier Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and Firefly.

Firefly in Malaysia offers its turboprop flights from Subang Airport, at the edge of Kuala Lumpur.

At Changi Airport, Firefly offers 20 daily flights to and from Subang, Ipoh and Kuantan.

Flight analytics group FlightGlobal said in a December report that services between Singapore and Subang accounted for 33.2 per

cent of Firefly's seat capacity.

This compared with 24.6 per cent of its seat capacity for flights between Subang and Penang, and 18.8 per cent between Subang and Johor Baru.

The RM20 million monthly loss could weaken the company's revenue. The Companies Commission of Malaysia said Firefly narrowed its net loss to RM36.65 million for the financial year ended Dec 31, 2017, from RM249.56 million in the 2015 financial year.

Revenue fell 9.1 per cent to RM301.9 million in 2017, against RM332.16 million in 2015, The Edge newspaper reported in September last year.

Firefly, a subsidiary of MAS, did not file its 2016 financial statement, the report said.

Firefly suspended operations to Singapore from Dec 1, saying that it did not have approval from the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM) to make the move from Changi Airport to Seletar Airport.

The carrier first agreed in 2014 that it would transfer all operations to a new passenger terminal to be built at Seletar Airport to handle turboprop flights.

According to CAAM, there are

regulatory issues that need to be resolved between the civil aviation authorities of both countries over the proposed move to Seletar Airport, as well as outstanding airspace issues.

These have to do with Malaysia wanting to take back air traffic services for airspace over southern Johor that were delegated to Singapore in 1974.

Singapore has said that the only change on its introduction of the Instrument Landing System is that pilots will be guided using ground instruments so that they no longer have to rely on just their vision.

Besides the air dispute, Singapore and Malaysia are also locking horns over territorial waters off Tuas.

On Tuesday, the two countries agreed to defuse tensions after their foreign ministers met.

On the air front, the ministers said Malaysia will immediately suspend its permanent restricted area over Pasir Gudang for flights, which it had imposed on Dec 25, while Singapore will do the same for new aircraft landing procedures for Seletar Airport.

The arrangement will be for a month, in the first instance.

Firefly's chief executive Philip See told The Malaysian Insight that he sent a letter to Changi Airport Group on Wednesday to request landing slots at Changi.

Singapore's Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan had said previously that Firefly's slots at Changi Airport had been redistributed to other airlines.



Ng Cheng Kwee and his wife Lee Lai Leng are said to be the key players among the five members of a syndicate who were charged in court in 2017 for roles relating to the SkillsFuture scam. The number of people arrested and charged has grown to 13, including some who fled Singapore.
ST FILE PHOTO

8 more charged in \$40 million SkillsFuture fraud case

\$20m still unaccounted for; bail denied for the fourth time for woman accused of playing integral role in scam

Selina Lum
Law Correspondent

Eight more suspects, including some who had earlier fled Singapore, have been charged over a \$40 million SkillsFuture scam that has been described as the largest case of fraud perpetrated against a public institution in Singapore.

In an update on investigations into the scam, the High Court yesterday was told that about \$20 million remains unaccounted for as the prosecution argued against granting bail to one of the alleged masterminds of the scam.

Housewife Lee Lai Leng, 40, who was described by prosecutors as playing a "pre-eminent role" in the syndicate, had her fourth attempt to seek bail denied. Her first three applications were denied by the district court.

Lee and her husband Ng Cheng Kwee, 42, are said to be the key players among five members of a syndicate who were charged in court in 2017 for various roles they allegedly played in relation to the scam.

The number of people who have been arrested and charged has grown to 13, including some who had skipped town. The details of how they were caught were not given in open court yesterday.

Between May and October 2017, the syndicate used nine shell companies - three training providers and six business entities - to submit more than 8,000 course fee subsidy claims to SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG).

Under an SSG scheme, provided certain conditions are met, a Singapore business entity that had sent its employees for skills training courses with registered training providers can apply to SSG for subsidy.

This subsidy comprises a portion of the total course fee paid by the applicant entity to the training provider. Depending on the claim method used, subsidies are payable to either the training provider or applicant entity.

The syndicate submitted the false claims on the basis that courses were provided by the three training providers to about 25,000 employees of the six business entities. The fraudulent applications and claims were made via SSG's online portal, SkillsConnect, using the SingPass credentials of various people.

After \$39.9 million was disbursed to bank accounts of the nine firms, a network of runners was used to dissipate the criminal proceeds.

Lee's brother, Lee Chi Wai, 32, is serving a jail term of five years and eight months for helping her stash away \$6.7 million in cash and 11kg of gold at his Sengkang flat.

Lee, who has been remanded in custody since November 2017, sought bail, contending that she needed to tend to her three children.

She also said she wanted to seek medical help for depression, and argued it was inconvenient for her to instruct her lawyers from prison.

Her lawyer, Mr Bachoo Mohan Singh, said her remand was "oppressive", given that other suspects, including some who had fled to China and withdrawn huge sums, have been granted bail.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Jordan Li said Lee should not be granted bail, given her "integral role" in the entire scam.

In the initial stages, she registered the business entities with SSG and allegedly submitted forged documents to support the bogus applications, said the DPP.

After the funds were disbursed, she allegedly received cash withdrawn by other syndicate members, hid the money at her brother's flat and used \$626,500 to buy 11kg of gold.

The DPP said the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD) has seized and frozen assets of about \$18.5 million. This includes the \$6.7 million, the gold and about \$11.1 million frozen in the bank accounts of companies and individuals used to receive the criminal proceeds.

The DPP argued that there was a risk Lee could further dissipate the proceeds if she was granted bail.

Since her arrest, Lee has not given CAD any information to help in the recovery of funds, and instead provided false information that hindered investigators, he said.

Lee was also at risk of absconding, he said, given that she faces a lengthy prison term that will be longer than the one her brother received for his relatively minor role.

She faces 14 charges of laundering criminal proceeds, five of cheating, nine of using forged documents and two of destroying evidence.

The maximum punishment for each charge of money laundering is 10 years in jail and a \$500,000 fine. Each charge of forgery carries up to 10 years in jail and a fine.

Apart from the 30 charges relating to the SkillsFuture fraud, she also faces four cheating charges in relation to a separate scam.

The DPP added that after investigations into the SkillsFuture scam are concluded, additional charges may be tendered against Lee, which will increase the sentence that she may face eventually.

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9

Number of shell companies used by the syndicate.

>8,000

Number of course fee subsidy claims submitted to SkillsFuture Singapore.

\$39.9m

Amount disbursed by SkillsFuture Singapore to the nine companies.

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30,000 got new jobs in 2018 through Adapt and Grow

PM Lee speaks to workers affected by economic disruption to get sense of their challenges

Joanna Seow
Manpower Correspondent

Economic disruption has seen some workers losing their jobs or having to move into new industries.

For about 2½ hours yesterday, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong spoke to some of the affected workers to get a sense of the challenges they faced in training to take on new jobs.

He also spoke to career coaches who encouraged them along, and to employers who helped them in their journey to switch careers.

His assessment: He was glad to see a lot of good work being done on this front.

"I am very happy to see the enthusiasm here, and that they are seeing

some results," he said, speaking to reporters at the Lifelong Learning Institute in Paya Lebar.

He highlighted the growing number of people placed in jobs through Adapt and Grow programmes. There were about 30,000 placements last year, a rise from 25,000 the year before.

The initiative run by statutory board Workforce Singapore (WSG) offers Singaporeans programmes to learn new skills, guide them in their job searches, adapt to new jobs and grow in their careers as the economy undergoes restructuring.

Although many people are anxious about the changes brought about by economic transformation, help is available, said PM Lee.

"In Singapore, we have spent a lot of effort to put in place quite comprehensive procedures, and already have some experience. So, Singaporeans should have confidence."

The changes Singapore faces are unavoidable, but the way forward is to become more productive, do

ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

In Singapore, we have spent a lot of effort to put in place quite comprehensive procedures, and already have some experience. So, Singaporeans should have confidence.

PRIME MINISTER LEE HSIEH LOONG, on the changes brought about by economic transformation.

better jobs and earn better pay, he said after his first visit to WSG's Careers Connect centre in Paya Lebar, where jobseekers can meet career coaches and access career resources.

PM Lee also said the economy is doing well and productivity has been high, which shows the economy is not just expanding, but is

upgrading and improving.

Singapore's economy grew 3.3 per cent last year and 3.6 per cent the year before. Growth in productivity, measured as real value-added per actual hour worked, came in at 4.5 per cent in 2017.

But the gains are uneven, with the export-oriented sectors upgrading rapidly to stay competitive,

while domestic services are slower, PM Lee said.

The domestic sector needs attention because many of the companies are local enterprises, which employ the bulk of Singapore's workers. "We want to make sure that we have programmes to reach them and can upgrade them and the workers in them," said PM Lee.

For example, the Lean Enterprise Development Scheme helps companies improve their productivity and profitability through applying technology and becoming less reliant on labour.

PM Lee said he was visiting Carers Connect because he wanted to see first-hand the work being done to help people transition into new jobs, and meet people affected by the transformation as well as those helping them through it.

When asked how Singapore is doing on its restructuring journey, he said a lot of progress has been made. "In eight years, our economy has grown, our productivity has gone up, our workers' wages have gone up, we have kept our unemployment down, and our employment rates have gone up, for the old people particularly, for the women also."

But the journey is not over, he said. "I don't think we will ever be done. Ten years from now, I am sure we will still be talking about productivity growth and upgrading, but 10 years from now, if we do our work right, we will be in a stronger position than we are today."

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Transitioning from IT sales to career in e-commerce



After working for more than 10 years in an information technology sales job, Ms Wang Luan Hua decided to carve out a new path in e-commerce.

The 46-year-old began searching for a new job two years ago, after taking a break from work in 2016.

It took six months of trawling through job portals before she came across an opening at eyewear retailer Spectacle Hut.

Her current employer, managing director Gary Khoo, was then looking for an IT assistant to help with Spectacle Hut's expansion of its online business. He had hired young people trained in IT, but they would leave after a few months. "They just want a stepping stone," he said.

Mr Khoo said that although Ms Wang had no experience in e-commerce when she applied for the job, she suggested taking a professional conversion programme for digital professionals.

The programme, part of the Adapt and Grow initiative, subsidises up to 90 per cent of the monthly salary and course fees for workers like her, who are aged 40 and older, or are long-term unemployed.

Mr Khoo said: "It seemed like a win-win situation. She has been with us for over a year, and hopefully she can work for us longer."

Ms Wang now does "a little bit of everything", including processing orders, tracking sales and updating the retail website and Facebook page.

While on the conversion programme, which lasted less than

Although Ms Wang Luan Hua then had no experience in e-commerce, she suggested taking a professional conversion programme for digital professionals, said Spectacle Hut's managing director Gary Khoo. ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

a year, she learnt skills such as visual marketing.

"Nowadays, photos speak not just a thousand words, but thousands of impressions," she said, referring to the number of times something has

been displayed on a screen. "If people like the visual, and the eyewear they receive is as they hoped, they leave good reviews."

Joanna Seow

WIN-WIN FOR EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE

It seemed like a win-win situation for us. She has been with us for over a year, and hopefully she can work for us longer.

“

SPECTACLE HUT MANAGING DIRECTOR GARY KHOO, on hiring Ms Wang Luan Hua.

Vietnam most likely to host second Trump-Kim summit, say observers

Chang May Choon
South Korea Correspondent
In Seoul

Vietnam appears to be the most likely contender to host the anticipated second summit between United States President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and the South-east Asian nation is most willing to do so, said experts and the media.

Singapore, which hosted the first summit on June 12 last year, is also being considered, alongside other options such as Thailand, Indonesia and Hawaii. Analysts say the venue carries symbolic meaning and will send a signal on what is at stake and how North Korea's denuclearisation can proceed.

Speculation about the summit has gained momentum in the wake of Mr Kim's visit to China earlier this week, in what appears to be a move to shore up Chinese support before he sits down with Mr Trump.

Nuclear talks have failed to advance due to US insistence on pressure and sanctions until North Korea takes concrete steps towards de-nuclearisation, such as submitting a list of its nuclear weapons.

However, Pyongyang is demanding corresponding measures from Washington, such as the easing of economic sanctions.

Expectations are high that the two leaders will seek to narrow the gap and set clearer goals when they meet again.

Sources in Washington told The Straits Times that the shortlist may be down to Vietnam and Thailand, both of which have offered venues.

"They both want it," one source said, mentioning Hanoi and Bangkok as possible venues.

The two countries, which have diplomatic ties with both the US and North Korea, can offer several potential venues. The 2017 Apec Summit – attended by Mr Trump – was held in Da Nang in Vietnam. Thailand has hosted major multilateral



United States President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a joint declaration after their historic summit at the Capella Singapore hotel on June 12 last year. ST FILE PHOTO

eral meetings in Bangkok and Hua Hin, but Phuket and Pattaya also have the requisite infrastructure.

The Thai government, however,

is planning to hold a general election "no later than March".

The White House scouting team has already checked out locations

in Hanoi, Bangkok and Hawaii, sources told CNN earlier this week.

South Korea's Munhwa Ilbo newspaper also said officials from the two sides met multiple times in Hanoi to discuss the summit.

Vietnam has conveyed an eagerness to host the summit to North Korea's Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho and South Korean President Moon Jae-in, South Korean reports said.

A source told Yonhap news agency that Vietnam is seeking to host the summit in the coastal city of Da Nang "for security reasons".

However, some analysts warn that choosing Vietnam could send the wrong message.

Vietnam has been lauded as a role model for North Korea in terms of prosperity and normalising ties with the US. But Asian politics expert Sean King of Washington-based consulting firm Park Strategies does not see a parallel, arguing that "North Korea can't risk opening up economically so long as there is a wealthier, larger ethnic-

Korean state next door". Vietnam was able to open up only after its own reunification, he added.

Dr Graham Ong-Webb of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies said holding the summit in Vietnam, which is in China's core geopolitical orbit, "only makes sense if the Trump administration seeks to resolve the Korean peninsula crisis in a way that also sticks it to China". This could mean the US offering "very attractive economic and security carrots in return for not only denuclearisation, but also North Korea's strategic alignment with the US against China".

Could Mr Trump and Mr Kim revisit Singapore? This "will be akin to pressing a reset button in recognition of the fact that nothing has moved since June 12", said Dr Ong-Webb.

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• Additional reporting by Nirmal Ghosh in Washington

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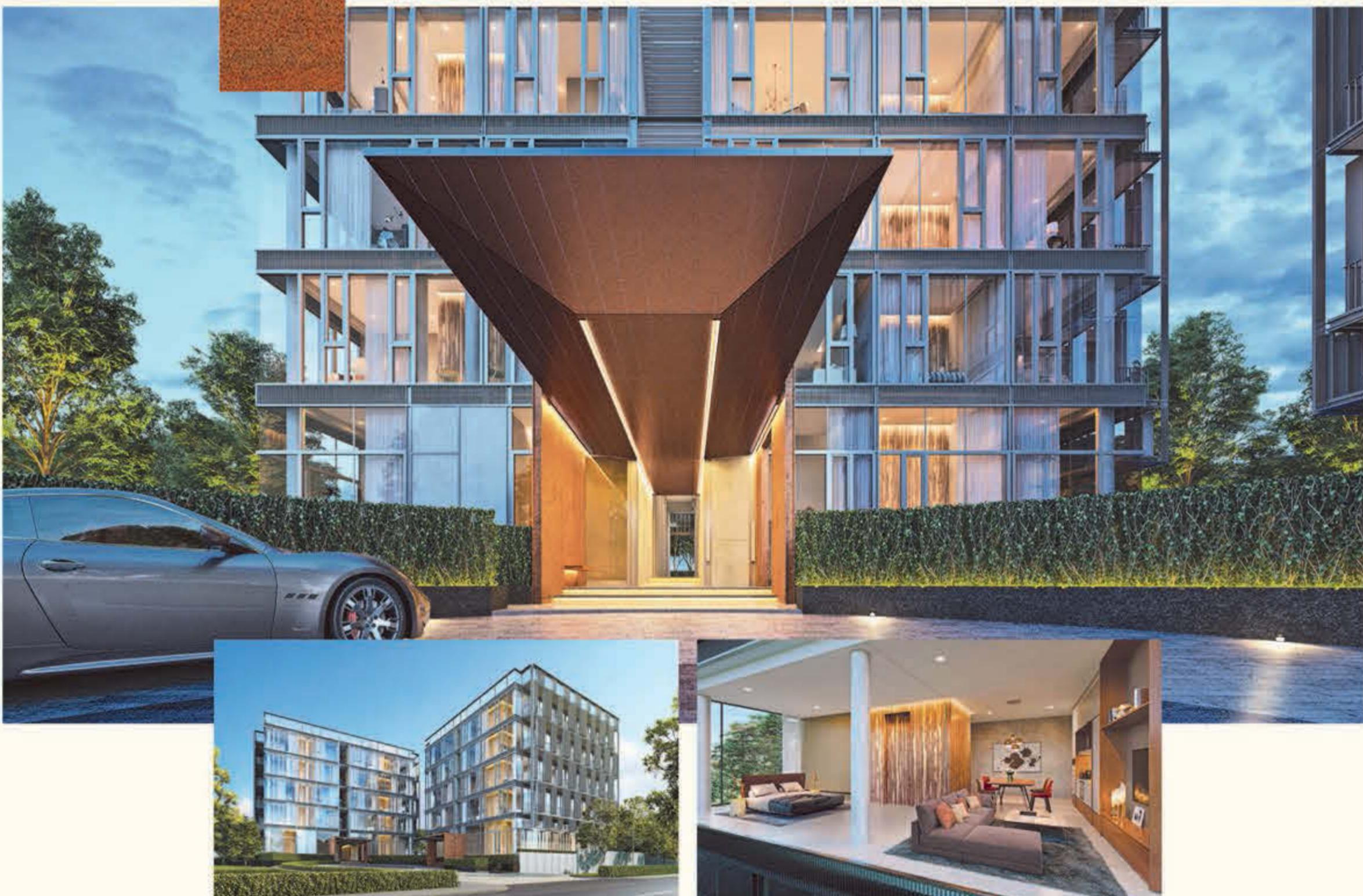
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Doctors don't back push to legalise drugs: Shanmugam

He says it is the drug companies which are doing so abroad; S'pore's approach is to help abusers break habit

Tan Tam Mei

Singapore hospitals have used drugs like heroin when "absolutely necessary" for medical purposes, but under "controlled conditions", which the Government has no issues with.

But this practice cannot be used to argue generally for the free availability of drugs, which is a debate taking place around the world, in part due to lobbying by pharmaceutical and drug companies, said Home Affairs and Law Minister K. Shanmugam.

The minister pointed out the growing talk around the world about legalising drugs, and how such debates have also started in the region, "unfortunately".

Last month, Thailand approved legislation to allow the use of medical cannabis, which is expected to take effect some time this year. Malaysia also reportedly started talks on the legalisation of medical cannabis late last year.

Speaking at the Selarang Halfway House yesterday, Mr Shan-

mugam said that Singapore is "very lucky" to be in an environment where the authorities are looking at "what really matters for people", which is to help abusers break the drug habit.

"Luckily, we are in a position to do that, and I think this is something that we can take great professional pride in," he said.

Selarang Halfway House, Singapore's first such institution to be run by the Government, aims to improve the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders.

He highlighted how some areas in the United States have legalised drugs such as cannabis because pharmaceutical and drug companies have changed the debate to focus on how drugs are important for medical purposes.

"They were very smart. A lot of money went into advertisements – on the importance of drugs for medical purposes," said Mr Shanmugam.

"I have not come across a single respectable medical association in the world which said the free

HOME AFFAIRS AND LAW MINISTER
K. SHANMUGAM

JUSTIFICATION LACKING
I have not come across a single respectable medical association in the world which said the free use of drugs is important for medical purposes.

“ ”

Home Affairs and Law Minister K. Shanmugam touring the women's block of Selarang Halfway House yesterday. The halfway house, Singapore's first such institution to be run by the Government, aims to improve the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. ST PHOTO: ONG WEE JIN

use of drugs is important for medical purposes."

He added that he had said before at international conferences that if the argument were sound, he would like to hear it from doctors and medical associations, and not from pharmaceutical companies or public relations companies.

Mr Shanmugam said a reason for the changing debate is the nature of the US political system, with pharmaceutical firms telling state governments that they will get a lot more tax revenue.

"Many of the American states have gone down this route," he said.

Now, these US state governments are finding that the amount they are spending for medical costs is three to four times the tax revenues they are getting from drugs, added the minister.

"That does not include the loss in productivity and increased crime rate which has taken place," said Mr Shanmugam.

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Trying to resist lure of drugs

The temptation to slip back into his drug abusing ways is something that Selarang Halfway House resident Ashraf (not his real name) knows all too well.

A few months after his release from jail in October last year, the 39-year-old former drug addict was offered a packet of heroin by a friend.

"That was a trigger," said Ashraf, who had served 40 months for drug consumption and theft.

"But I thought to myself, I have already suffered in prison, and I lost a lot.

"So, I pushed it away and said no politely," added Ashraf, who was speaking to the media after a tour of the Selarang Halfway House yesterday.

While serving his time, he received support from his counsellor, who taught him how to cope in such situations.

When faced with the lure of drugs, Ashraf tries to remove himself from the situation. "I also think about my mum and my children."

He has been convicted at least six times for drug-related crimes such as trafficking and consumption.

Now, he wants to turn over a new leaf, and keeps busy working the night shift at a laundry plant.

The divorcee also visits his three children, aged between 13 and 18, every day.

"I believe if you really want to change, you need to be sincere and change your heart," he said.

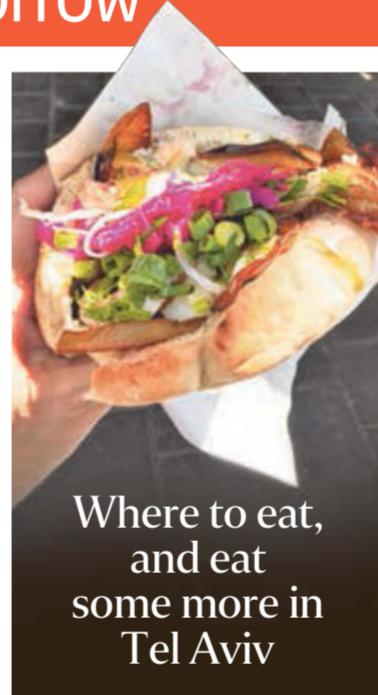
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Tan Tam Mei

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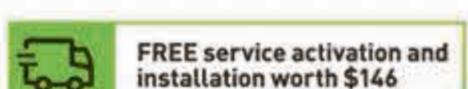
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Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He is set to travel to Washington on Jan 30 and 31 to kick off high-level trade talks with the United States. His visit is a continuation of this week's talks between both sides. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

News analysis

US-China trade deal possible, but expect hostilities to continue

Analysts say the two sides remain far apart on Washington's core concerns



Danson Cheong

China Correspondent
In Beijing

China's top trade negotiator Liu He is set to travel to Washington on Jan 30 and 31 to kick off high-level talks with the United States. His visit has been confirmed by US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who told reporters about it at a briefing, Bloomberg reported yesterday.

The visit to Washington by Chinese President Xi Jinping's top economic adviser is a continuation of this week's talks, and signals that both sides are making progress on a possible trade deal before March 1 – the deadline before the US imposes heightened tariffs on US\$200 billion (\$270 billion) of Chinese imports.

But while news of Mr Liu's visit and results of trade negotiations in Beijing have buoyed hopes that an accord can be reached in the trade war that has seen billions of dollars of imports from both countries slapped with tariffs, analysts say both sides remain far apart on core US concerns. This is one reason why any deal reached might only be a temporary pause in trade hostilities.

After the Beijing round of trade talks ended on Wednesday, both sides released public statements.

While the general tone of both statements was positive, Beijing's comments contained few details other than saying the talks set a foundation for resolving mutual concerns. Washington's statement, on the other hand, indicated that both sides still "occupy distant positions on structural issues that form the core of US key demands, such as China stopping state subsidies for its state-owned enterprises (SOEs)", said a report by Fitch Solutions Macro Research.

Associate Professor Li Mingjiang of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies said this creates a "huge challenge for subsequent negotiations".

"The Americans want China to treat SOEs basically as normal market players, but if you look at Chinese policy statements by top leaders, they want to continue the old way of handling SOEs," he said.

He also said that while the US might want Beijing to play a smaller role in managing the economy, it is difficult for the Chinese to make concessions in this area.

The economic reality of China is such that the government would continue to play a big role in managing the economy, as this is linked to the political mandate of the Chinese leadership, he said.

Veteran Singapore diplomat Bilahari Kausikan shares a similar view. He wrote in the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute's January Asean Focus report that dominance of the Chinese Communist Party gives any business linked to it a privileged position. "In effect, this means every Chinese business, because no Chinese business can succeed against the will of the party. It is precisely that privilege that the US and other countries deem unfair," he wrote in the report released this week, adding that Chinese leaders would not take measures that compromise party dominance.

This increases the likelihood of a "softer deal" being struck, which does not address these structural issues, said Fitch Solutions' Asia country risk analyst Darren Tay.

China has already pledged to buy a "substantial amount" of agricultural, energy, manufactured goods and other products from the US, said Washington. It has also taken measures to address US concerns, including releasing a draft foreign investment law banning forced technology transfers.

"However, this would still leave key disagreements unresolved, which could result in re-escalation in future," said Mr Tay.

This possibility is something the Chinese are fully cognisant of. In recent days, even as Chinese state media praised the progress made at the trade talks, they have also urged caution. Both the nationalist tabloid Global Times and China Daily have flagged the increasingly hardline stance the US is taking on China.

"Sino-US disputes over trade, technology and national security will continue. So, China should be fully prepared to tackle them appropriately," China Daily said in an op-ed on Tuesday.

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Trump repeats threat to declare emergency over border wall

White House reportedly considering diverting funds for relief projects to barrier



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MCCALLEN (Texas) • US President Donald Trump has again threatened to declare a national emergency along the border with Mexico, as he seeks funding for a wall he says will keep out dangerous immigrants – his latest jab in a fight with Democrats in Congress that has now shut down parts of the government for a record-tying 21 days.

Such a declaration, almost certain to be challenged in court, would, in theory, allow Mr Trump to sidestep Congress and divert money from military projects towards construction of the wall that has been a core focus of his nationalist campaign.

Speaking to Fox News in an interview broadcast on Thursday, Mr Trump reiterated that he had “the absolute right to declare a national emergency”. But when pressed on a timeline for doing so, he said he would see what happens over the coming days.

On Thursday, US media reported that the White House had asked the Army Corps of Engineers to look into the possibility of diverting funds allocated for relief projects in areas damaged by natural disasters such as Puerto Rico and Florida.

Analysts say the emergency declaration would likely be challenged as case of presidential overreach, which means the wall could still face being blocked.

However, it would give Mr Trump political cover with his base by showing that he had done what he could to build the wall. At that point, Mr Trump could end the shutdown and declare a win.

The embarrassing closure of parts of the US government will set a record 22 days today.

Yesterday, some 800,000 federal workers who are working without pay or not at all because of the impasse missed their first pay cheque since the shutdown.

Mr Trump toured the border with Mexico on Thursday to press his case for a wall, and warned of “unprecedented” instigations spreading across the country.

He used the backdrop of the Rio Grande border river in McAllen, Texas, to ramp up what has already turned into a hugely messy political fight with Democratic opponents.

Demonstrators, union members and federal employees at a rally outside the White House on Thursday to call for an end to the partial government shutdown. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

With typical rhetorical flourishes, Mr Trump said that only building more walls along the Mexican border could stop an “avalanche of violent crime”.

“They have nowhere there is no security, and you don’t even know the difference between Mexico and the United States,” he told a meeting of border patrol officers.

“They have women tied up, they have tape over their mouths, electrical tape. If we had a barrier of any kind, a powerful barrier, whether it is steel or concrete... we would stop it cold,” Mr Trump said.

Opposition Democrats are refusing to approve US\$5.7 billion (\$87.7 billion) in wall funding, saying that overwhelming numbers of illegal immigrants do not commit serious crimes and that Mr Trump is promoting the project mainly to satisfy his right-wing base.

Mr Trump said that illegal immigrant crime stretched right up into the heart of America.

However, widely respected studies show that illegal immigrants commit fewer crimes than people born in the US.

Mr Trump’s refusal to sign a funding Bill without money for the wall has resulted in a partial government shutdown, with hundreds of thousands of federal employees – including air-traffic controllers, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Coast Guard – going without pay.

Signalling that he is ready to maintain the game of brinkmanship, Mr Trump tweeted on arrival in Texas that he would scrap a visit to the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, which runs from Jan 21 to 25.

Mr Trump had been expected to make a brief appearance at the influential get-together, attended by many world leaders, but said that opposition Democratic “intransigence” required him to stay home.

AGENCEFRANCE-PRESSE

ing to the figures in a survey of households in 2017.

But the shutdown, which began just before Christmas, took many federal workers by surprise, and is lasting longer than most expected.

That has left furloughed employees stuck at home, sifting through garages and closets to find possessions and personal treasures to sell.

“You have to take a kind of cold-hearted look at what you have, you and decide what could be marketable to someone else,” said Mr Lay Elhard, on furlough from his job as a media specialist at Acadia National Park in Maine. He started a Facebook group for people to buy items from furloughed federal workers.

Guidance from government offices has provided little comfort so far, some workers said.

No one in Washington seems to know how long the partial government shutdown will go on, but there has been little reason to believe the end is close. Meanwhile, the Office of Management and Budget has provided sparse advice other than encouraging workers to reach out to creditors and mortgage companies before debt becomes due.

President Donald Trump, when asked about the hardship faced by workers, said federal employees “are on my side”.

“You take a look at social media, so many of those people saying, ‘It is very hard for me, it is very hard for my family, but Mr President, you are doing the right thing. Get it done.’ They are patriots,” he said.

If the shutdown extends into next week, it will become the longest continuous closure of the government in US history.

On Thursday, hundreds of furloughed federal employees chanting “We want our pay!” marched on the White House to protest against the shutdown. WASHINGTON POST/REUTERS

US economy set to grow, but shutdown casts shadow

Nirmal Ghosh
US Bureau Chief
In Washington

America's economy will continue to grow this year, expanding at 2.6 per cent, US Chamber of Commerce president and chief executive Thomas Donohoe predicted on Thursday, pushing back against those who fear a pending recession.

Most previous shutdowns were short and did not affect the economy in the aggregate, he said, while cautioning: “If we have an extended shutdown, I think that will show up in the data pretty clearly.”

He cautioned that the economy needs skilled foreign workers, and said that political parties in polarised Washington needed to recreate the middle ground and fix America's broken immigration system, as well as pay more attention to upgrading infrastructure – a promise thus far lost in political acrimony.

“Many of Washington's troubles are essentially taxes, and American businesses need more trade – not incivility – could be helped by

rebuilding the political centre and restoring responsible governing.” But he welcomed the new US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which has replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement, and urged Congress to approve it.

He also urged the White House to drop steel and aluminium tariffs on Mexico and Canada, as encouragement to other trading partners also hit with the tariffs.

Referring to trade negotiations with China, he welcomed attention to what the United States saw as China's theft of intellectual property, forced technology transfer and other unfair practices.

But he added that tariffs were essentially taxes, and American businesses need more trade – not incivility – could be helped by

“The modern trading system is an American triumph,” he told a packed chamber in a State of American Business address.

His speech came against a backdrop of a robust economy tempered by stock market volatility as uncertainty persists over the partial federal government shutdown and crucial trade negotiations with China.

Selling made-in-America goods and services to the 98 per cent of the world's consumers who live outside the US is absolutely fundamental to our growth and prosperity as a nation,” Mr Donohoe said.

“Forty-nine of every 50 US companies that sell goods overseas are small businesses – many of them could not survive without trade, especially in America's heartland.”

“Optimism is consistently high. Business owners tell us they have been encouraged by stronger economic growth.”

“The chamber projects continued growth of around 2.6 per cent for 2019. We expect unemployment to remain low, wages to keep expanding and inflation in range of the Fed's target of 2 per cent,” he added.

“Revolving door of a recession don't match up with our optimism.”

He also made a strong pitch for diversity and inclusiveness.

“We must have a steady supply of talented and hardworking people to do the work of a modern economy so our nation can compete and lead,” he said.

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NUMBER OF RESIDENTS IN INDIA'S ASSAM STATE WHO MAY LOSE CITIZENSHIP **A24**



Drivers in Untertauern, Austria, putting snow chains on their car tyres on Monday as the authorities in Austria and southern Germany close roads because of heavy snowfall and avalanches. A 35km section of a highway in Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany, came to a complete standstill until early on Thursday, forcing hundreds of truck and car drivers to spend the night on the road. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Heavy snowfall in Alps leaves 7 dead, tourists stranded

Several regions declare emergencies; roads, railways, resorts closures paralyse tourism

BERLIN • Parts of Europe were hit by heavy snowfall, paralysing travel and tourism with conditions that left at least seven people dead.

Heavy snowfall and strong winds were projected to continue in Austria and southern parts of Germany until yesterday, bringing an additional 50cm of snow over 24 hours to parts of the Alps that have already seen as much as 300cm of snow over the past week.

Several regions have declared states of emergency as some roads, railways and ski resorts remain closed.

Hundreds of tourists and residents are cut off in Austria because of unusually high avalanche risks.

The weather has been so severe that helicopters that would usually be used for controlled avalanches are grounded.

North of the Austrian border, in the German state of Bavaria, many schools have closed and rail service on many lines has been cancelled.

Avalanche warnings are active in most Alpine areas of the state, and the town of Miesbach declared a state of emergency on Monday.

Ongoing snowfall and icy roads caused 35km of a highway in Baden-Wurttemberg to come to a complete standstill until early on Thursday, forcing hundreds of truck and car drivers to spend the night on the road.

In the municipality of Jachenau, the fire brigade is keeping the local grocery store stocked since commercial trucks are unable to reach the area, according to Mr Oliver Platzer, a spokesman for the Bavarian Ministry of Interior.

Davos, Switzerland, where many

world and business leaders are gathered for the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum at the end of the month, has reported nearly 63cm of snow.

While the amount of snow that has fallen in the past weeks varies widely from area to area, it is unusual for so much snow to fall over such an extended period of time, according to Mr Thomas Wostal, a spokesman for Austria's Central Meteorological Office.

RECORD SNOWFALL

In terms of amount of snow over 10 days, statistically this happens only every 30 to 100 years, depending on the region.

MR THOMAS WOSTAL, a spokesman for Austria's Central Meteorological Office, on the amount of snowfall in the region.

"In terms of the amount of snow over 10 days, statistically this happens only every 30 to 100 years, depending on the region," he said.

Several ski stations in the regions of Styria, Upper and Lower Austria have also had to close.

HohenTauern, a village in the central part of the country, has been cut off since last Saturday.

Roughly 270 visitors, including about 60 children, are waiting for one of the two passes leading from the village to open again.

"The village is safe and we're keeping the streets clear," said Mr Franz Haas, owner of a hotel in HohenTauern. "The children are enjoying outdoor walks, tobogganing and the building of snowmen."

Fewer tourists than usual are staying in the village and there are farms nearby, so there is no shortage of food, Mr Haas said, adding that there is also enough gas to heat cabins and hotels for at least two more weeks.

Much of the country is on its highest avalanche alert level, with seven skiers and snowshoe hikers having died since last Saturday and two hikers missing. Most of the victims perished in avalanches but emergency services say two of them died when falling into deep snowdrifts and suffocating.

Hundreds of soldiers and firefighters have been working alongside public employees and volunteers to clear roads and roofs buried in the snowfall.

Meanwhile, the country's tourism sector is also feeling the chill.

"We are 50 per cent down on our short-term bookings," said Ms Petra Nocker-Schwarzenbacher, head of tourism at Austria's chamber of commerce. "Everyone's watching the weather," she said.

NYTIMES,AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE,
XINHUA



German army soldiers clearing snow from the roof of a grammar school in Berchtesgaden, Germany. PHOTO: EPA-EFE



A man using a snow blower on Thursday to clear snow on the platform of a train station in Berchtesgaden, Germany. PHOTO: EPA-EFE



A snow plough clearing an area in Ramsau am Dachstein, Austria, on Tuesday. Austria is on its highest avalanche alert level. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Oceans warming at faster pace, say researchers

TAMPA • The world's oceans are heating up at an accelerating pace as global warming threatens a diverse range of marine life and a major food supply for the planet, researchers said.

The findings in the US journal *Science*, led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, debunk previous reports that suggested a so-called pause in global warming in recent years.

The latest technology shows there was no such hiatus, raising new concerns about the pace of climate change and how it affects the planet's main buffer – the oceans.

"Ocean heating is a very important indicator of climate change, and we have robust evidence that it is warming more rapidly than we thought," said co-author Zeke Hausfather, a graduate student in the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California, Berkeley.

About 93 per cent of excess heat – trapped around the earth by greenhouse gases that come from the burning of fossil fuels – accumulates in the oceans.

The latest report relied on four studies, published between 2014 and 2017, that gave more precise estimates of past trends in ocean heat, allowing scientists to update past research and hone predictions for the future.

A key factor in the more accurate numbers is an ocean monitoring fleet called Argo, which includes nearly 4,000 floating robots that "drift throughout the world's oceans, every few days diving to a depth of 2,000m and measuring the ocean's temperature, pH, salinity and other bits of information as they rise back up," said the report.

The new analysis shows warming in the oceans is on pace with measurements of rising air temperature. And if nothing is done to reduce greenhouse gases, "models predict that the temperature of the top 2,000m of the world's oceans will rise 0.78 deg C by the end of the century".

The thermal expansion would raise sea level 30cm, above any sea level rise from melting glaciers and ice sheets.

"While 2018 will be the fourth warmest year on record on the surface, it will most certainly be the warmest year on record in the oceans, as was 2017 and 2016 before that," Mr Hausfather said.

"The global warming signal is a lot easier to detect if it is changing in the oceans than on the surface... If the ocean wasn't absorbing as much heat, the surface of the land would heat up much faster than it is right now," Associate Professor Malin Pinsky from the department of ecology, evolution and natural resources at Rutgers University told The New York Times.

"In fact, the ocean is saving us from massive warming right now." AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

COOLER EFFECT

If the ocean wasn't absorbing as much heat, the surface of the land would heat up much faster than it is right now. In fact, the ocean is saving us from massive warming right now.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MALIN PINSKY, from the department of ecology, evolution and natural resources at Rutgers University.

The image is a full-page promotional flyer for Courts' New Year Sale. It features a pink header with the Courts logo and a banner stating 'Enjoy Abundant Savings & the Lowest Prices Guaranteed this New Year with COURTS!'. A large yellow circle on the left contains the text 'NEW YEAR SALE' and 'Bigger Savings For A Better Home', accompanied by a cartoon pig character. To the right, there's a section titled 'Sure-Huat Giveaways' with a large '\$888,888' and a QR code for the 2019 New Year Catalogue. The central part of the flyer is filled with various product categories like Food Preparation, Washers/Dryers, and Air-Con/Fans, each with its own promotional offers and savings. A '3 Days Deals Till Mon' banner is in the top right corner. The bottom of the page has a small disclaimer about offer validity.

Japanese baby with full head of hair star of shampoo ad

TOKYO • A Japanese baby who became Insta-famous for her full head of hair from birth is now the star of her first shampoo commercial.

Baby Chanco first captured the hearts of netizens in May last year when her mother Mami Kano started posting photographs of the four-month-old with thick, poofy locks on social media. Her voluminous hairstyle, which occasionally threatened to overwhelm her tiny frame, won her thousands of fans on her Instagram account. She now has 345,000 followers.

The one-year-old starred in her first campaign for P&G-owned Pantene on Monday with Japanese TV announcer Sato Kondo, known for her natural grey hair. The advertisement tells Chanco's "hair story" from birth and encourages people to embrace their differences.

Ms Kano, who was interviewed by People magazine on Tuesday, said: "I'm so surprised by the reaction (to the video), but also very proud of the praise from many countries."

She said she has no plans to trim her daughter's hair any time soon: "I prefer to keep her hair long. In the future, I want to try some new arrangements, like braids."

Ms Kano added that the key to caring for her daughter's hair is brushing and letting her "live as she is".



Baby Chanco, whose voluminous hair occasionally threatens to overwhelm her tiny frame, starred in her first campaign for Pantene on Monday. PHOTO: P&G JAPAN HAIR CARE COMMUNICATIONS

CPTPP will keep drawing keen parties, say experts

But US and China unlikely to be among them even though they stand to benefit

Charissa Yong
US Correspondent
In Washington

The US and China are highly unlikely to join the line of economies keen to be part of the landmark Pacific Rim trade deal that recently entered into force, even though they stand to benefit from doing so, said a panel of trade experts and Asian diplomats on Thursday.

Nonetheless, the 11-nation Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) will continue to attract interested entrants, despite the fact that the joining process may take time due to the high standards imposed on all members of the trade pact, they said.

The experts also predicted that negotiations for another trade pact, the Asean-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, are unlikely to be concluded this year because of the sheer difficulty of reaching a consensus between such diverse countries, especially since it is an election year for several of them.

The panellists, who were speaking at an Asia Society Policy Institute discussion on the future of Asian trade, included Singapore Ambassador to the US Ashok Mirpuri, his Thai counterpart Virachai Plasai, Obama-era top trade negotiators Wendy Cutler and Michael Froman, and international trade professor Peter Petri of the Brandeis International Business School.

Mr Froman, who led the US negotiating team for the original Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), said that being left out of the deal disadvantaged American exporters, who are losing out to their competitors on market access.

President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the TPP immediately after he assumed office in January 2017.

Dr Petri said that while he was not expecting China to sign up to the CPTPP, the trade pact's rules on intellectual property protection, the role of state-owned enterprises and data transfers were possible examples of how the country could conform better to global norms. The same issues remain key sticking points in China's ongoing trade dispute with the US.

"A commitment by China... would represent a strong signal to the rest of the world that China is seriously committed to aligning its policies with global norms," he said.

Many of the CPTPP's provisions also align with China's stated goals of opening up its economy and making its innovative sector stronger, he added.

Mr Froman said there was a long way to go before China could live up to the high standards of the trade deal, but that more countries were likely to enter the CPTPP, giving countries outside the pact like China an incentive to raise their own standards so they could eventually join it.

CPTPP ministers will meet in Tokyo next week to discuss possible new members. South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Britain were among those interested to join, said the panellists.

"People are putting up their hands. And we're quite ready to start accepting them, but without lowering any standards... It is not an easy agreement to join," said Mr Mirpuri.

The Singapore envoy said that while the idea of China joining the CPTPP was very attractive, there was a chance that the US would choose not to join as a result, leading to a fragmentation of the regional economy into US-tied and Chinese-tied economic spheres.

Mr Mirpuri also said the US-China trade talks this week served as a signal for other countries.

"This is where we're optimistic that this week's bilateral conversation... will give us some direction as to where the (US-China) relationship will fall over the next few years, and the rest of us will 'take dressing' from that," he said.

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Caught in a fatal tangle



A dead olive ridley sea turtle found with a rope around its neck on Marari Beach near Mararikulam in southern India's Kerala state on Thursday. These turtles hatch by the millions each year in their nesting grounds along the coast of Odisha state in south-eastern India. They face the hazard of getting tangled in nets and ropes the fishing industry uses.

PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Japan-S. Korea ties chill further over forced labour issue

Tokyo accuses Seoul of trying to pass the buck with Japan firms facing compensation rulings

Walter Sim
Japan Correspondent
In Tokyo

Japan slammed South Korea yesterday for trying to pass the buck on the issue of wartime forced labour, as frosty ties between the two US security allies chill even further in an increasingly acrimonious dispute.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a regular news briefing that Seoul's finger-pointing at Tokyo for "politicising" the issue was "extremely regrettable", and that the onus is on South Korea to resolve what ought to be its own domestic issues.

His remarks came one day after South Korean President Moon Jae-in called on Japan to express humility and stop politicising the issue.

Earlier this week, a South Korean court approved the seizure of Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corporation's assets in the country, after it refused to pay 100 million won (\$S122,000) in compensation each to four South Korean plaintiffs in a seminal ruling last October.

Japan was forced to step in, Mr Suga said, because the ruling violates a 1965 internationally recognised agreement that forms the very basis of bilateral ties today.

Under the agreement, Tokyo paid US\$500 million, or the equivalent of about US\$4 billion (\$S5.4 bil-

lion) in today's terms, for the "complete and final" resolution of colonial-era reparations. This is binding to South Korea's judiciary branch as well, Mr Suga added.

But while past South Korean administrations recognised that the deal includes individual claims, the courts have now ruled otherwise.

Seoul prosecutors, meanwhile, are grilling former chief justice Yang Sung-tae, 70, for allegedly pressuring justices to suspend rulings to curry favour with former president Park Geun-hye.

The precedent of the Nippon Steel ruling led to a November verdict against Mitsubishi Heavy, which was ordered to pay up to 150 million won each to 11 people.

Adding fuel to the fire was a ruling yesterday against Osaka-based shipbuilder Hitachi Zosen, which was ordered to pay 50 million won to a wartime labourer. Lawsuits involving about 70 Japanese companies are said to be pending.

Japanese Economy Minister Hiroshige Seko yesterday said these developments are detrimental to business sentiment of Japanese companies in South Korea.

On Wednesday, Tokyo requested formal bilateral talks, as allowed for under the 1965 agreement should the interpretation of terms come under dispute. This is the first time such talks have been sought, but as of yesterday, Seoul

reportedly had not responded.

If this fails, Japan can take the case to the International Court of Justice, as it has said it will do as a matter of last resort.

Since the October verdict against Nippon Steel, the two countries have been in a row over the dissolution of a foundation set up by Seoul with Japanese funding to compensate former comfort women, and the lock-on of a fire-control radar by a South Korean warship on a Japanese patrol plane.

Japan's media yesterday accused Seoul of letting the crisis fester. Emotions are high in South Korea, which this year marks the 100th anniversary of the March 1 uprising against Japanese colonialism.

Emeritus professor Shinya Murase of Tokyo's Sophia University, who is a member of the United Nations International Law Commission, told The Straits Times: "The issue is quite clear: Korea's handling of the issue (including the Supreme Court and the government) is contrary to the 1965 agreement on the settlement of claims."

Senior fellow Tsuneo Watanabe at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation think-tank said that if Japan does not stand firm, "any kind of bilateral agreement with South Korea will not be effective in future as and when the government changes".

He said South Korean administrations tend to pull the history card whenever approval ratings fall, and that Mr Moon is "clearly facing a crucial political moment".

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Pahang Royal Council's decision to be revealed today

KUALA LUMPUR • Malaysians hoping for more clarity on who will become their next King after a meeting of the Pahang Royal Council yesterday, have to wait another day.

A top official of the Pahang state government said the outcome of the meeting will only be announced today.

Pahang state secretary Sallehudin Ishak yesterday told reporters who had waited at the Kuala Lumpur hotel where the meeting was held: "Any decision made today will be announced tomorrow at Istana Abu Bakar, Pekan. That is all."

Pekan is the royal town in Pahang state where its royal family resides.

Datuk Seri Sallehudin declined to comment when asked about the outcome of the meeting, The Star newspaper reported.

The subject matter of the meeting was not revealed to the media, though the succession to the Pahang throne was widely expected to have been discussed.

The Pahang ruler is Sultan Ahmad Shah, 88, who is reported to be unwell.

There has been speculation that Sultan Ahmad could abdicate to make way for his son, Tengku Abdullah, 59, to become the next Pahang ruler.

This in turn could position Tengku Abdullah as the next

Malaysian king.

The question of who would become the country's next ruler arose after Kelantan's Sultan Muhammad V last Sunday abdicated after just two years – three years short of the five-year reign for the king.

The ruler from the Pahang house is next in line to be picked as the next constitutional monarch, based on a unique rotation system among Malaysia's nine Malay royal houses.

If Pahang declines to take up the throne, the next in line is the ruler of Johor state, followed by Perak.

The meeting yesterday started around 4pm and was chaired by Tengku Abdullah, who is the Pahang Regent.

Malaysia's Conference of Rulers – comprising the nine state sultans and four governors of states with no royal families (Penang, Melaka, Sabah, Sarawak) – will hold a special meeting on Jan 24 for the purpose of electing the country's next king.

The Keeper of the Ruler's Seal at the national palace, Syed Danial Syed Ahmad, has said that the next Malaysian king will take his oath of office on Jan 31.

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The rural and hilly constituency of Cameron Highlands in Pahang has the highest percentage of Orang Asli (indigenous tribes) among the 222 parliamentary wards. They make up some 21 per cent of the 32,000 voters. PHOTO: BERNAMA

PH govt faces first bellwether by-election

Result in ethnically mixed Cameron Highlands seat will indicate whether there is voter regret

Shannon Teoh
Malaysia Bureau Chief
In Kuala Lumpur

The hilly constituency of Cameron Highlands in Pahang has seen a steady procession of Malaysian Cabinet ministers in recent days, with the eight-month-old Pakatan Harapan (PH) government facing its first bellwether by-election on Jan 26.

PH, after being hailed for its historic win in last May's general election, is now facing public grumblings as the four-party coalition is struggling to deliver on many of its election promises.

"The result in this ethnically mixed seat will indicate whether there is real voter regret among Malaysians who did the unthinkable and changed their government for the first time in six decades," policy consultant Bower Group Asia's director Adib Zalkapli told The Straits Times.

The name Cameron Highlands is synonymous with cool-weather resorts, and rolling fields of vegetables, flowers and tea.

The PH candidate, Democratic Action Party's (DAP) Manogaran Marimuthu, suffered a narrow 567-vote defeat in the May polls, which was won by a Barisan Nasional (BN) candidate. But the result was annulled in November after an election court ruled that BN had won due to bribery.

Mr Manogaran, 59, will again be nominated as PH's candidate today.

The Umno-led BN has decided on former senior policeman Ramli Mohd Noor, 61, the force's highest-ever ranked Orang Asli.

The onus is on PH to wrest the seat even though it enjoys a comfortable majority in Parliament with 129 of the 222 seats.

BN has been in a shambles, with only three of 13 parties remaining in the coalition, and it continues to be stung by exposés of billion-ringgit scandals from when it was in power. These include further revelations of the IMDB saga, a huge financial shortfall in the Muslim pilgrimage fund Tabung Haji and overpayment to firms from China

in infrastructure deals.

On the other hand, having argued that BN cheated, a PH defeat will mean their support has slipped, backing recent opinion surveys of lower approval for the fledgling government as compared with when the Mahathir Mohamad administration was first installed.

"If I win, it will be a victory for truth, transparency and fairness," DAP Pahang deputy chief Manogaran said last week. But if he loses, then the waning of PH's honeymoon will truly be complete.

PH is also facing headwinds that are set to slow the economy over the next two years and growing anxiety among the Malay-Muslim majority over the erosion of special privileges they have enjoyed for decades.

"The result in this ethnically mixed seat will indicate whether there is real voter regret among Malaysians who did the unthinkable and changed their government for the first time in six decades," policy consultant Bower Group Asia's director Adib Zalkapli told The Straits Times.

The Cameron Highlands by-election is the fifth since Tun Dr Mahathir took power – with three for state assembly seats in Selangor won handsomely by PH.

The fourth was the forced vote in Port Dickson to allow Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to return to Parliament.

The voting trend of Orang Asli and Indian minorities in Cameron Highlands will indicate how much PH's promises of better welfare – which has so far seen the return of fuel subsidies and the end of the highly unpopular 6 per cent goods and services tax – still hold sway.

A third of voters are from the Malay-Muslim community, with analysts keen to see how they react in the first polls since last month's pro-Malay rally by opposition parties which drew more than 50,000 in Kuala Lumpur.

Several surveys show that Malay support for the government has dropped below 50 per cent. Mr Anwar's ally Rafizi Ramli, a Parti Keadilan Rakyat vice-president who runs big-data outfit Invoke, said last month that there was a consistent 20 percentage point fall among all communities as of December, compared with half a year earlier.

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Crucial battle

The Cameron Highlands constituency has the highest percentage of Orang Asli (aboriginal tribes) among the 222 Malaysian parliamentary wards.

Of the 32,000 voters, the Orang Asli comprise 21 per cent, Malays

34 per cent, Chinese 30 per cent, and Indians 15 per cent of the votes.

The Pahang ward is also where a big chunk of the country's vegetables, flowers and fruits are grown, with some of the prod-

ucts exported to countries such as Singapore.

A regular complaint of residents in the highlands is the illegal, and constant, expansion of farms to meet ever-growing export demand.

Ex-Nissan chief faces 2 new charges of financial misconduct

Prosecutors also indict carmaker, aide over alleged under-reporting of Ghosn's pay

TOKYO • Tokyo prosecutors have filed two new charges of financial misconduct against former Nissan chief Carlos Ghosn, meaning the auto tycoon is unlikely to be leaving his jail cell soon.

Lawyers for the former jet-setting executive filed a bail application hours after the new charges were revealed yesterday, but have acknowledged that he will probably be detained until a trial.

Ghosn, 64, denies any wrongdoing and argued in a dramatic first court appearance on Tuesday that he has been "wrongly accused and unfairly detained".

He was already facing a first charge for allegedly under-reporting his compensation over five years to the tune of five billion yen (\$S62.4 million) in official documents to shareholders.

The charges filed yesterday alleged that the under-reporting continued for another three years.

And they include a charge of "aggravated breach of trust" over a complex alleged scheme in which Ghosn is said to have tried to transfer losses on foreign exchange contracts to Nissan's books.

As part of the scheme, he is accused of also using company funds to repay a Saudi acquaintance who put up collateral for the contracts.

Prosecutors also filed charges yesterday against Nissan and Ghosn aide Greg Kelly over the additional three years of under-reporting pay.

"We took these steps today because we believed that they are cases worthy of indictment and going to trial," said deputy chief prosecutor Shin Kukimoto.

A prosecutor's office spokesman said charges against Ghosn carry a maximum prison sentence of 15 years.

The breach of trust charge is regarded as particularly serious, and

Ghosn's lawyer Motonari Otsuru admitted on Tuesday it would be "very difficult" to secure bail for his client.

"In general in such cases in Japan, it is indeed the case that bail is not approved before the first trial does take place," he said, adding that it could be six months before the case comes before a judge.

Ghosn has appeared in public just once since his shock Nov 19 arrest, during the Tuesday court hearing called after his lawyers requested that judges explain the tycoon's ongoing detention.

One of the most recognisable foreign executives in Japan, Ghosn was led into Tokyo District Court in handcuffs and with a rope around his waist and was noticeably thinner.

He spoke in a strong voice and said he had acted "honourably, legally and with the knowledge and approval of the appropriate executives inside the company".

The judge said his ongoing detention was justified because he poses a flight risk and could tamper with evidence if released.

A request filed the same day by his lawyers to end his detention was rejected.

Ghosn's prolonged detention has put the spotlight on Japan's justice system, which has come in for some international criticism.

With each allegation against Ghosn, prosecutors can seek up to 22 days of detention to investigate the claims – the period for the aggravated breach of trust allegation expired yesterday.

And with each formal charge, prosecutors can hold Ghosn for two months of pre-trial detention, which is renewable.

Nissan said yesterday it has filed its own criminal complaint against its former chief "on the basis of Ghosn's misuse of a significant amount of the company's funds".

It said it took the charges filed against the firm "extremely seriously" and was continuing its investigation into the case.

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The charges filed yesterday allege that the under-reporting continued for another three years. And they include a charge of "aggravated breach of trust" over a complex alleged scheme in which Ghosn is said to have tried to transfer losses on foreign exchange contracts to Nissan's books.

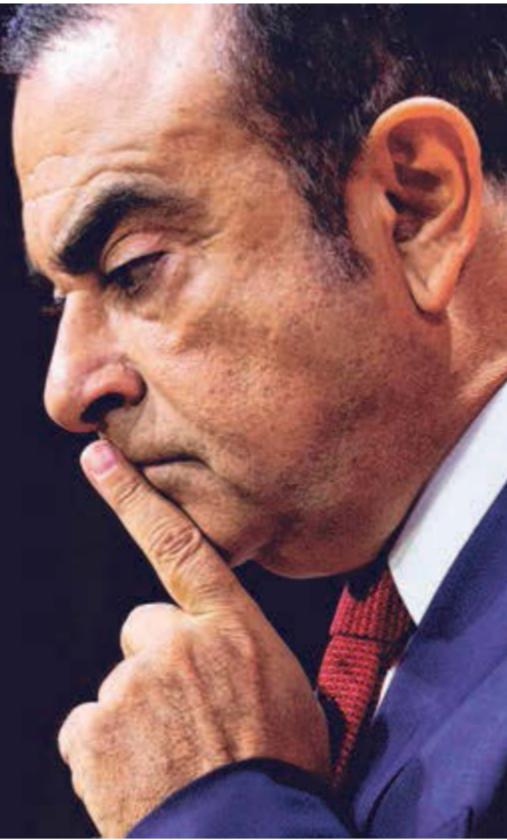


PHOTO: REUTERS

'Ace of aces' prosecutor eyes winning hand against Ghosn

TOKYO • The prosecutor aiming to take down former Nissan chairman Carlos Ghosn is known as the "ace of aces", a high-flier in an elite special department that deals only with the most high-profile cases.

Mr Hiroshi Morimoto, who also enjoys a reputation as "Mr Clean", has been in charge of the special investigation section of the Tokyo prosecutors office for just over a year, and now faces one of the biggest cases of his career.

In his early 50s with black hair flecked with grey, Mr Morimoto runs a team of 20 top officials investigating the complex and multifaceted case of alleged financial misconduct by the auto industry tycoon.

"It's the cream of the crop of investigators," said Mr Yasuyuki Takai, a former member of the unit and now a lawyer.

It was members of Mr Morimoto's team, dressed in dark suits, who rushed up the steps of Ghosn's private jet at Haneda Airport and whisked him away for questioning.

Grainy images at the airport were captured by the Asahi Shimbun daily, and the surprise arrest stunned Japan and the business world in general.

Mr Takai said the special investi-

gations unit was split into three sections, dealing with corruption, white-collar fraud and tax evasion. Only the first two are working on the Ghosn case, which does not involve allegations of fiscal fraud.

The office has a record of securing high-profile convictions.

Until now, the unit's biggest case was arresting former prime minister Kakuei Tanaka in 1976 for his part in an immense global bribery scandal involving US aerospace company Lockheed.

It also discovered and dismantled a complex cartel of firms involved in rigging bids for building a high-speed train between Tokyo and the western city of Osaka.

Ghosn's case has sparked huge international interest and led to criticism from abroad of the Japanese legal system, which allows the authorities to detain suspects for long periods without formal charges.

Mr Morimoto, who keeps his cards close to his chest, has not made any public comment on the case to date.

He also did not address the court during a special hearing on Tuesday held to explain the reasons behind Ghosn's continued detention.

This has not prevented hordes of reporters from camping outside his

home in the hope of gleaning a nugget of information.

One of the quirks of the Ghosn case is that Mr Morimoto now finds himself in a game of legal cat-and-mouse with his former boss: Mr Motonari Otsuru, a former head of the special unit and now the lead defence lawyer for the former Nissan chief.

The two men have contrasting personalities, according to Mr Masaru Wakasa, a lawyer, political figure and well-known TV personality who worked with them both.

Mr Wakasa told local media that Mr Otsuru is "calm and analytical", certainly the image the defence lawyer displayed to the press during his only news conference on Tuesday.

In contrast, Mr Morimoto is described as "passionate and ago-getter", not shy of speaking the truth to power.

"I had a few arguments with him when I was his boss," Mr Wakasa said.

Former unit member Mr Takai said: "They are rivals, but in the battle they are fighting it is not the person with the strongest force of character that will prevail, but the person who collects the most evidence to convict or acquit Ghosn."

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Better air in China can boost lifespan: Study

US researchers say country can add 2.9 years to life expectancy by meeting WHO standards

BEIJING/SHANGHAI • China could raise average life expectancy by 2.9 years if it improves air quality to levels recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO), according to a new study from a US research group.

China has vowed to determine the precise impact of air and water pollution on health as part of its efforts to raise average life expectancy to 79 years by 2030 from 76.3 years in 2015.

According to the Energy Policy In-

stitute at the University of Chicago (Epic), big air-quality improvements made in the last five years have already been enough to push up average lifespans.

"China is winning its war against pollution... (It) is due to see dramatic improvements in the overall health of its people, including longer lifespans, if these improvements are sustained," Epic director Michael Greenstone said at an



Air and water pollution is one of the major health risks in China for the next 20 years, say Chinese experts in another study. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

event in Beijing on Thursday.

According to Epic's findings, air-quality improvements made in the smog-prone northern city of Tianjin over the last five years are expected to have raised the average lifespan of its 13 million residents by 1.2 years.

China cut average concentrations of hazardous particles known as PM2.5 to an average of 39 micrograms per cubic m last year, down 9.3 per cent from 2017 after a campaign to curb coal use and improve industry and vehicle standards.

But average emission levels remain significantly higher than China's own 35mcg standard and WHO's recommended 10mcg limit. In northern industrial regions, average concentrations are much higher.

In a study cited by state-owned news agency Xinhua yesterday, a group of top Chinese health experts identified air and water pollution as one of the major health risks in China for the next 20 years, alongside obesity, depression and Alzheimer's disease.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang declared "war" on pollution in 2014 amid fears that the damage done to the country's environment as a result of more than 30 years of untrammelled economic growth would lead to social unrest.

But with much of the low-hanging fruit already taken and the economy facing a slowdown, China has admitted the campaign is under pressure.

"It would be very difficult for China to meet the WHO standards, even with strong efforts to reduce industrial emissions and fossil fuel consumption," said research professor Jiang Kejun of the Energy Research Institute, a government think-tank. "Emissions from non-industrial sectors – agriculture, for instance – also play a big part in air pollution and are hard to put under control." REUTERS

Zuji refund worries mount in HK after S'pore exit

HONG KONG • Zuji's Hong Kong customers fear they will not be able to get refunds for services they booked through the once-popular online travel platform, less than two months after The Straits Times reported its exit from Singapore.

ST reported in November that Zuji was suspended from issuing airline tickets through the International Air Transport Association's centralised air ticket billing service after it failed to pay up for those it sold to customers.

The report added that Zuji had cut staff in Singapore to focus on operations in Hong Kong. Its Hong Kong and Singapore websites have been closed since November.

Zuji Hong Kong on Dec 5 said on Facebook its website will be taken offline due to the tight deadline for the new website development".

It added: "We aim to launch our new website in early Q1 2019. All passengers who have purchased from us should not be affected."

Hong Kong's Travel Industry Council said there are 25 complaint cases against Zuji, mainly involving air ticket refunds worth HK\$130,000 (S\$22,500), Apple Daily reported.

One complainant who gave her surname as Chung told Apple Daily she had bought three air tickets in June via Zuji for HK\$8,900 for a Sept 17 flight to Osaka but the trip was scuttled by Super Typhoon Jebi, which hit Osaka and flooded Kansai International Airport, forcing its closure.

She said Zuji initially told her she would get a refund in 12 weeks, but this was later pushed to 16 weeks. It has been four months since but she has yet to see the money.

"They are still saying the system is upgrading... (I) fear it will close down," Ms Chung said, adding that she has heard that Zuji Hong Kong's travel agent licence has expired.

The Travel Agents Registry (TAR) has confirmed that Zuji Hong Kong's licence expired on Wednesday and was not renewed.

But a TAR spokesman noted that while Zuji Hong Kong may not continue to operate as a travel agent in Hong Kong, the company has said that it will honour flight and hotel reservations made on its website.

Zuji Hong Kong yesterday apologised for the inconvenience.

"We regret to share that we are experiencing technical difficulties on processing refund," it said on Facebook. "Please be reassured we are looking into this."

Zuji was once a leading Asia-Pacific online travel agency, offering flight, hotel and car rental bookings as well as package deals.

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Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen flanked by former premier William Lai (far left) and new premier Su Tseng-chang after a news conference in Taipei yesterday. The new administration will be tasked with winning back public support after the Democratic Progressive Party suffered a heavy defeat to opposition Kuomintang in local elections last November. PHOTO: REUTERS

Tsai names new premier amid resignations

Appointment key to her chances of staying in power beyond next presidential vote

TAIPEI • Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen appointed the ruling pro-independence party's former chairman as premier yesterday, a day after incumbent William Lai said he was resigning, along with the entire Cabinet, in response to local election defeats.

The election losses last November presented a major challenge to Ms Tsai, who came under mounting criticism at home over her reform agenda while facing renewed threats from China, which considers Taiwan its own.

Ms Tsai appointed Mr Su Tseng-chang, a two-term former chairman of her Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), as premier. She said Taiwan faced challenges amid rising Chinese threats and trade tension between key backer the United States and China.

"Taiwan's democracy and development must face certain challenges," said Ms Tsai, adding that China was looking to force its "one country, two systems" structure on the island.

Mr Su, 71, vowed to lead the administration amid the challenges and learn from earlier mistakes.

"The situation is difficult and the task is tough," he said.

The resignations add to the multiple challenges facing Ms Tsai. Amid the ongoing trade war between the United States and China, Taiwan's two largest trading partners, Chinese President Xi Jinping has ratcheted up the pressure, calling in a speech last week for the beginning of talks on an eventual unification of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. Ms Tsai rejects China's claims to sovereignty over Taiwan.

Taiwan's premier forms the Cabinet and runs the government on a day-to-day basis.

Mr Su was appointed premier in 2006 by former president Chen Shui-bian, who infuriated Beijing and strained Taiwan's relationship with the US during his tenure from 2000 to 2008.

Popular among the DPP's core supporters, he has led Taiwan's most populous New Taipei City for years. He was defeated by a candidate from Kuomintang in November last year.

Some from within Ms Tsai's party have urged her not to seek re-election. She has not explicitly said whether she would run for president next year.

January's presidential vote. The new administration will be tasked with winning back public support after the DPP suffered a heavy defeat to the China-friendly opposition Kuomintang in local elections last November.

Mr Lai is the second premier to quit since Ms Tsai took office in 2016. It is standard practice in Taiwan for leaders to quit when their party loses a major election, and Mr Lai had initially offered to resign in the immediate aftermath of last November's vote before Ms Tsai persuaded him to stay on.

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REUTERS/BLOOMBERG

Maliki urges India to be open to trade in face of protectionism

Nirmala Ganapathy
India Bureau Chief
In New Delhi



India should exercise leadership on the economic front by remaining open to trade in the face of growing protectionism, said Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohamad Maliki Osman.

Speaking on a panel at the Raisina Dialogue 2019, an annual multilateral conference on geopolitics and economics held in New Delhi, Dr Maliki said on Thursday: "As the fastest growing economy in the world, and a market of over one billion people, India's actions are closely watched. By remaining open to trade and pressing on with economic integration, India will send a strong signal that it remains open for business. I think that is very important."

He also welcomed India's efforts to sort out its trade issues including with China as part of the negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), a mega trade agreement being negotiated between the 10 member states of Asean and India,

China, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea and Japan.

"As one of the largest economies in the grouping, India's efforts have a significant impact on the conclusion of this agreement. So India's moves to resolve bilateral trade issues with other RCEP partners like China is a positive step that will help bring us closer to the finalisation of this agreement," he said.

India and Singapore have close economic and security ties that grew after Singapore helped India become a full dialogue partner of Asean in the 1990s.

Singapore has urged India to do much more in Asean and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has indicated India is keen on boosting ties with the region.

Dr Maliki said Singapore supported India's vision of playing a more substantial role in South-East Asia, in areas from trade to defence, and on the strategic front.

"From South-east Asia's perspective, there is certainly much more business to be done. In 2017, Asean's trade in goods with India stood at US\$73.6 billion (\$99.4 billion) while the figure for China, Japan and South Korea ran upwards of US\$150 billion each. So much more can be done between India and South-east Asia," said Dr Maliki.

He said Singapore looked forward "to greater practical security cooperation between India and South-east Asia, particularly through the inaugural edition of the trilateral maritime exercise among India, Singapore, and Thailand in the Andaman Sea this year".

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Controversial Bill sparks violent protests in India

Lower House passes Bill that offers non-Muslim migrants citizenship

Debarshi Dasgupta
India Correspondent
in New Delhi

A controversial Bill in India that offers citizenship to non-Muslim migrants from three neighbouring countries has moved closer to becoming law.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Lower House of Parliament, where the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies command a majority.

The move set off violent protests in Assam and other north-eastern states which share a long riverine and land border with Bangladesh, one of the three countries named in the Bill. Locals have long protested against what they say is the influx of migrants from there, citing pressure on resources and a threat to their identity from the growing number of Bengali-speaking migrants, both Hindu and Muslim.

The Bill's passage on Tuesday prompted Asom Gana Parishad, an Assam party and ally of the BJP government, to withdraw its support.

The BJP has defended the move, arguing that India has the "moral obligation" to shelter persecuted re-



Activists burning effigies of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Assam's Chief Minister on Tuesday after the country's Lower House of Parliament passed a Bill granting citizenship to non-Muslim migrants from three neighbouring countries, including Bangladesh. PHOTO: AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

fugees from neighbouring countries. It is seen as an attempt by the party to shore up support among its Hindu voters in the run-up to parliamentary elections this year.

The Bill proposes to open up Indian citizenship to non-Muslim illegal migrants from six minority com-

munities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who have been in India for at least six years. The communities are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians. It, however, excludes Muslim minorities such as the Ahmadiyyas from

Myanmar, a country that shares a border with India but which has been left out of the scope of this Bill.

Opposition parties walked out of Parliament in protest and criticised the Bill as a divisive move that links citizenship to religion. The BJP now faces the hurdle of clearing it

through the Upper House of Parliament, where it is weaker.

The Bill also undercuts a major Supreme Court-monitored citizenship verification process under way in Assam to identify illegal migrants. The move seeks to update the 1951 version of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) with names of individuals (or their descendants) who are listed in the state's electoral rolls or hold other documents, issued up to March 24, 1971, proving they are citizens.

The Assam Accord, signed between Assamese protesting groups and the government in 1985, deems residents who entered the state after March 24, 1971 to be illegals and requires them to be "expelled in accordance with law".

The BJP has endorsed the NRC as a way to crack down on illegal migration. It has, however, struggled to square its opposition that is directed against Muslim migrants with that of local groups in Assam and other north-eastern states, who oppose migrants irrespective of their religion. The party sought to calm opposing groups last week by setting up a high-level committee to suggest ways to safeguard interests of ethnic Assamese, but this failed to soothe frayed nerves.

Now, about a million residents of Assam are closer to losing their citizenship rights after they failed to contest their exclusion from the NRC. A further three million, however, had filed fresh claims by the deadline of Dec 31 to be included as citizens of India.

Of the total 32.9 million residents who produced documents to prove they are Indian citizens, around 29 million made the cut. The claims filed by those excluded will now be verified along with around 265,000 objections filed against those already in the register. This process is expected to be concluded by the end of June.

If left out of the final version of the NRC, individuals have the option of seeking legal recourse, though this would be a daunting and costly exercise for many poor people. While deporting the "illegal migrants" has been mentioned unofficially, most believe this option is not on the table. Instead, media reports suggest that those deemed "illegal" will lose privileges such as the right to vote, own property or receive state welfare benefits. They may, however, be allowed to continue to live in India on a "work permit".

More than 92,000 individuals have so far been declared foreigners in Assam (through processes independent of the NRC) but only around a thousand of them are housed in detention centres meant for illegal migrants. The others continue to eke out a living on the margins of society.

"I don't think the government wants the large numbers who may be declared as foreigners under the updated NRC to be housed in detention centres or to deport them. Instead, they would like them to be stateless and stripped of their rights and remain in India as second-class citizens," said Mr Abdul Kalam Azad, a human rights researcher based in Assam.

In 1997, the election commission had identified 370,000 individuals as "doubtful voters" in the state and disenfranchised them. "Of these, 125,000 are yet to prove their citizenship. So, this process will go on for a long, long time and those excluded will have to fight a long battle to retain their Indian identity," he added.

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No more tweeting for Saudi asylum seeker after 'threats'

BANGKOK • An 18-year-old Saudi asylum seeker who fled from her family to Thailand and harnessed the power of Twitter to stave off deportation yesterday abruptly suspended her account, with friends saying she had received death threats.

Ms Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun's attempt to flee the ultra-conservative kingdom has been embraced by rights groups as a beacon of defiance against repression.

The Thai authorities initially threatened to deport her after she arrived in Bangkok from Kuwait last weekend.

But, armed with a smartphone and a hastily opened Twitter account, she forced a U-turn from Thai immigration police who handed her into the care of the United Nations' refugee agency as the #SaveRahaf hashtag case bounced across the world.

Ms Qunun alleges abuse by her family - who deny the allegations - and rights groups also said she had renounced Islam, risking prosecution in conservative Saudi Arabia.

Yesterday afternoon, she posted a final cryptic tweet on her profile saying: "I have some good news and some bad news." Shortly after, her account was deactivated.

"Rahaf received death threats and for this reason she closed her Twitter account, please save Rahaf's life," tweeted her supporter @nourahfa313, who has flanked Ms Qunun's social media campaign with her own updates on Twitter.

"I understand that there have been death threats against her but I don't know the details," said Human Rights Watch's Mr Phil Robertson, adding that even threats from online trolls need to be taken seriously.

Ms Qunun's swift use of Twitter saw her amass over 100,000 followers within a week, highlighting her plight and allowing her to avoid the fate of countless other refugees who are quietly sent back home or languish in Bangkok detention centres. Though her asylum case has moved at lightning speed, the mystery over which country will accept her remains.

Australia has dropped the strongest hints so far, after the UN urged the country to accept her, but its foreign minister said this week that it was still assessing the request.

Thailand's immigration chief Surachate Hakparn told reporters yesterday that as far as he knew, there were "two or three" countries which could offer asylum.

The South-east Asian nation is not a signatory to a convention on refugees, and asylum seekers must be referred to a third country. Until that happens, she is under the care of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Bangkok.

She refuses to see her father, who travelled to Thailand and has expressed opposition to her resettlement. AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

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What the parents say...

"ACS (International) ignites students' passion to learn through building strong relationships with deeply devoted and highly experienced teachers and excellent pedagogic and sporting infrastructure. The school has achieved a fine blend of academic rigour and holistic learning. The emphasis on CCAs and community service as well as the ample opportunities for student leadership makes ACS (International) a 'cut above' and the preferred choice for our children."

Larisa and Shivinder Singh

"Sending our daughter to ACS (International) was the best decision we made. She used to be shy and introverted and has now become a confident, caring and motivated student leader."

Debra and Samuel Koh

"We deeply appreciate the contribution ACS (International) has made towards making our son confident, capable and thoughtful. The school has provided an environment of personal care, support and encouragement to nurture him into a compassionate young man. We are also very proud of his academic, leadership, co-curricular and public speaking skill development."

Anju Uppal

"We like the holistic learning environment of ACS (International). Apart from academics, the school gives the students plenty of learning opportunities outside the walls of the classroom through service trips in continents as far as Africa, school projects and events, CCAs, student leadership roles and more."

Our children thoroughly enjoy the IB programme, the holistic environment of the school, and are very proud to be students of ACS (International). The school has helped our children to grow and mature in so many ways, whilst equipping them with the necessary skills needed for their university studies and future endeavours. We are very glad to have sent both of our children to ACS (International)."

Steven and Pau Kim Kan



IB Information Sessions

14 & 15 January 2019

11am, 3pm & 4:30pm

16 January 2019

9:45am

61 Jalan Hitam Manis, Singapore 278475



Mr Rob Burrough
Principal



Mrs Tan Siew Hoon
Vice Principal



Mr Gavin Kinch
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Dr Kristopher Achter
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Warnings of pain fail to sway opinion on May's Brexit deal

British lawmakers likely to reject deal with EU even amid official warning of recession

LONDON • British politicians yesterday resumed debating Prime Minister Theresa May's apparently doomed Brexit deal, with fresh warnings over what is at stake ringing in their ears.

After concerns were raised by Japan's Prime Minister and business group CBI, Work and Pensions Minister Amber Rudd underlined

the damaging impact of leaving the EU in March without a new trade agreement in place, and hinted she could even quit over the issue.

"This is a strong and great country, we will find a way to succeed," Ms Rudd told BBC Radio. "But I do not think that no deal will be good for this country and I am committed to making sure that we find an alternative."

Ms Rudd declined to answer when asked three times if she would resign from the government if it pursued a no-deal Brexit.

According to The Guardian newspaper, CBI director-general Car-

olyn Fairbairn was to make a speech yesterday saying that a no-deal exit risks shrinking Britain's GDP by up to 8 per cent, and urging politicians to put jobs and the economy first.

The interventions seem unlikely to be enough to help Mrs May's unpopular agreement pass Parliament when it is put to a vote in the House of Commons next Tuesday.

An analysis by the BBC on Thursday suggested Mrs May's deal is on course to suffer the biggest government defeat in the history of the Commons in the vote.

A no-deal Brexit remains the de-

fault option if Parliament does not back Mrs May's deal, even though a majority of lawmakers this week supported a motion designed to reduce the chances of Britain tumbling out of the bloc on March 29.

Such a scenario could trigger a recession, with the pound falling by as much as 25 per cent, official analysis suggests.

Yesterday, Mrs May's spokesman Alison Donnelly told reporters the legislation needed for leaving the EU will be passed in time for Brexit day on March 29, after a newspaper quoted a minister as saying the exit could be delayed.

Mrs May held meetings with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in London on Thursday.

Speaking after that, Mr Abe publicly backed Mrs May's Brexit deal and offered his "deepest respect" for the work his British counterpart has done in securing an agreement with the EU. "We truly hope that a no-deal Brexit will be avoided and, in fact, that is the whole wish of the whole world," Mr Abe said at a press conference in Downing Street.

"There is a good deal on the table and for those who want to avoid no deal, backing the deal is the thing to do," Mrs May said at the press conference.

But Mrs May is not in full control of events. Parliament is flexing its muscle and Cabinet ministers are also starting to raise their head above the parapet.

Business Secretary Greg Clark has said a no-deal Brexit should be ruled out. "We need to act to avoid a no-deal because I don't think there is anything remotely like a majority in Parliament that will tolerate this," he told BBC Radio on Thursday. BLOOMBERG, REUTERS



Britain's Work and Pensions Minister Amber Rudd has underlined the damaging impact of leaving the EU in March without a new trade deal in place.

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Missing girl found alive 3 months after parents were shot dead in US home

MINNEAPOLIS • A 13-year-old Wisconsin girl, missing since her parents were discovered shot dead in their home three months ago, has been found alive.

She was malnourished and dirty, after apparently fleeing her captor in a remote community, police and media said.

One man, who has not been identified by police, was in custody, the authorities said, in connection with the case of Mr James Closs, 56, and his wife Denise, 46, whose bodies were found on Oct 15 while their daughter Jayme was missing.

The child's disappearance made national news, sparking massive searches, with 1,500 volunteers scouring woods and fields in suburban Minneapolis, and the offer of a US\$25,000 (S\$33,800) reward for her safe return.

Jayme was found on Thursday, by a resident of the town of Gordon,

about an hour's drive from the Closs home, after the child, described as skinny and dirty with matted hair and wearing shoes that did not fit, knocked on her door, the Minneapolis Star Tribune said.

"This is Jayme Closs! Call 911!" said a neighbour who recognised

KEEPING A PROMISE

We promised to bring Jayme home and tonight we get to fulfil that promise.

BARRON COUNTY SHERIFF CHRIS FITZGERALD

the child, the paper added. Neighbours in the small northern community called the police, who said they took a suspect into custody. The exact details of the child's escape were not released.

Late on Thursday, Barron County Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald announced that Jayme had been found in Gordon, but he had few other details.

"We promised to bring Jayme home and tonight we get to fulfil that promise," Mr Fitzgerald said in a statement, thanking the community. "A suspect was taken into custody," he added. "We do not have any other details at this time as this is a very fluid and active investigation."

Jayme was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment, but her condition was not immediately clear, with the sheriff asking the media and public to respect the family's privacy. REUTERS



Jayne Closs, 13, was missing when her father James, 56, and mother Denise, 46, were found shot dead in their Wisconsin home on Oct 15. She was found on Thursday, malnourished and dirty, after apparently fleeing her captor in a remote community about an hour's drive from her home. The police have arrested a suspect.

PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

US-led coalition starts Syria troop pullout

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No official details given but US forces seen leaving airfield in north-east Syria

HASAKEH (Syria) • The US-led coalition in Syria has begun withdrawing its troops, a spokesman said yesterday, less than a month after US President Donald Trump made his shock announcement.

The force which has battled the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) since 2014 started scaling down but it remained unclear how long the drawdown process would last.

"CJTF-OIR has begun the process of our deliberate withdrawal from Syria," spokesman Colonel Sean Ryan told Agence France-Presse in a statement, referring to the US-led anti-militant force.

"Out of concern for operational security, we will not discuss specific timelines, locations or troops movements," he said.

The Syrian Observatory for Hu-



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meanwhile accused president Barack Obama of abandoning the Middle East to Islamist militants and Iran. PHOTO: NYTIMES

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man Rights reported that the coalition had started scaling down its presence at Rmeilan airfield in the Hasakeh province in north-eastern Syria.

"On Thursday, some American forces withdrew from the Rmeilan military base," said Mr Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Britain-based monitoring organisation.

He put the number of US forces who left at 150 and added that around 10 armoured vehicles and some heavy equipment was also removed from Rmeilan.

"This is the first such pullout of American forces since the US President's announcement" of a military withdrawal from Syria last month, he said.

The US-led coalition has several other bases across north-eastern Syria, as well as in neighbouring Iraq, where Mr Trump has said his forces would remain.

A US defence official in Washington had earlier confirmed to AFP that equipment was being removed from Syria.

The US-led coalition, which also includes countries such as France and Britain, was formed in mid-2014 to counter the expansion of ISIS after it proclaimed its self-styled "caliphate".

Mr Trump claimed last month that the terrorists had been defeated and that US troops could therefore come home.

Fighter jets and special forces have played a key role in efforts to claw back the territory lost to ISIS.

The beginning of the drawdown coincided with a visit to the Middle East by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who insisted in Cairo on Thursday that the withdrawal would go ahead despite widespread criticism.

On the same day however, Mr Pompeo stated in a speech at the American University in Cairo that "when America retreats, chaos often follows".

In the same speech Mr Pompeo accused Mr Barack Obama of sowing chaos by abandoning the Middle East to Islamist militants and Iranian influence in a blistering critique of the former president's policies.

At the site of a landmark 2009 speech by Mr Trump's predecessor aimed at improving relations with the Islamic world, Mr Pompeo presented America as "a force for good in the Middle East" and suggested Mr Obama saw the US as "a force for what ails the Middle East".

The address by the chief American diplomat drew criticism from former US officials and analysts who accused him of misreading history and camouflaging Mr Trump's own desire to reduce US commitments in the region.

Critics of Mr Trump's decision, including within his own Republican camp, have said that a precipitous withdrawal would shatter US policy in Syria and allow ISIS to rebuild.

They have also argued that it would further allow Damascus ally Iran to extend its influence across Syria and potentially threaten Israel.

Since his surprise announcement last month, Mr Trump has stressed any withdrawal would be coordinated, gradual and "prudent".

But observers have stressed that the announcement of the withdrawal was having the same impact in reshuffling the cards of the conflict as the withdrawal itself.

"The damage is done. On the ground, the announcement of the pullout is as if they were already gone," said Associate Professor Fabrice Balanche, a geographer and Syria expert.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, REUTERS

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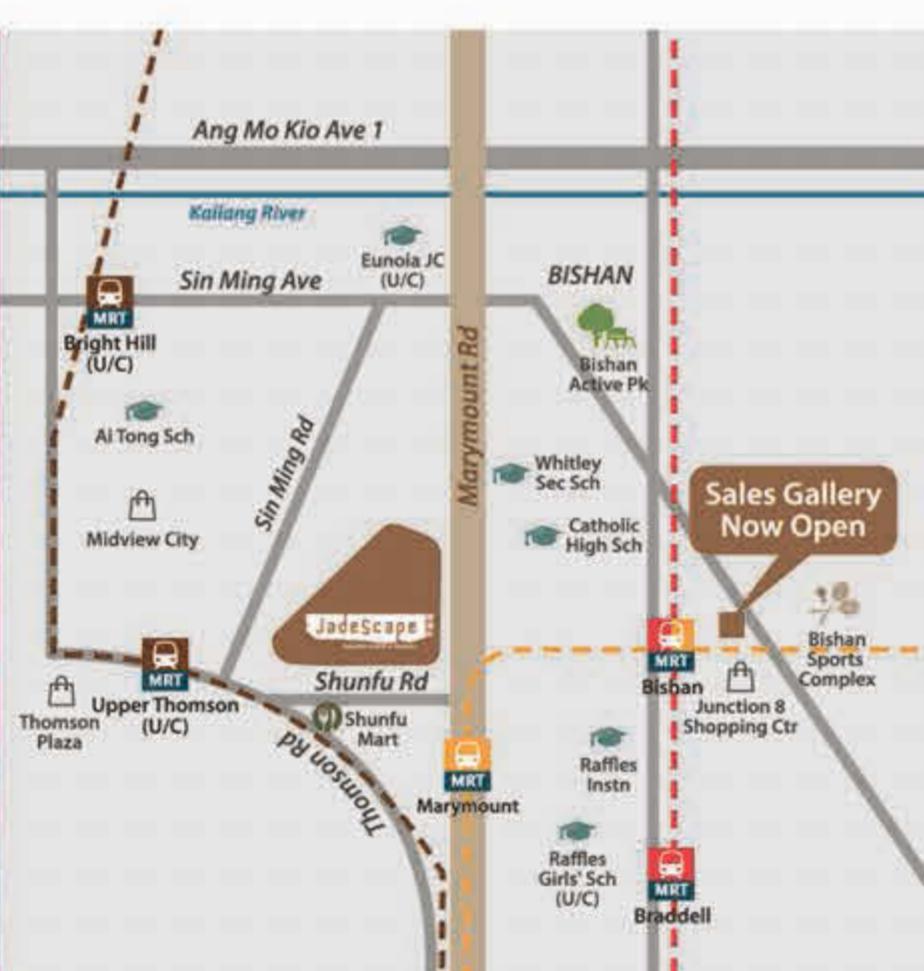
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An entrance to Charing Cross station of the Tube in London. Some of the subway's 11 lines and 270 stations go back to 1863 – a likely cause of high pollution as "deep, poorly ventilated tunnels" make up part of the system, the study said.
PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



An hour in Tube as bad as a day in traffic: Study

Air in some stations of London rail up to 50 times dirtier than on street level, it says

LONDON • Pollution levels in London's underground rail system are so high that an hour's travel is the same as spending a whole day in traffic, new research has found.

In some Tube stations, the air can be up to 50 times dirtier than on the street, with pollution particularly bad on lines that run a long way under the city, said the study, commissioned by Transport for London.

"Mass concentrations of PM at the platforms on London Underground lines are typically much higher than in ambient air," said the report, referring to the concentration of tiny poisonous particulate matter in the air.

Nearly 9,500 London residents die prematurely every year as a result of long-term exposure to air pollution, a 2015 study by researchers at King's College London showed.

London's subway is the world's oldest and some of its 11 lines and 270 stations date back to 1863 – a likely cause of high pollution as "deep, poorly ventilated tunnels" make up part of the system, said the report.

Air drawn into the tunnel network becomes contaminated by the wear and tear of railway components, such as train wheels and track blocks, it said.

At the deepest station, Hampstead, the concentration of PM2.5 – the smallest particulates that do the most damage because they penetrate the bloodstream – averaged 492 over a 10-day period last year. That compares with an average of just three in rural Scotland, and 16 on a busy London road.

Guidelines by the World Health Organisation (WHO) advise that levels should not exceed daily mean of 25.

Globally, air pollution kills about seven million people every year, according to the WHO. Long-term exposure can affect human respiratory and inflammatory systems and lead to heart disease and cancer.

The report, published on Wednesday, said there was not enough information to assess the effects of exposure to underground pollution on commuters, but health risks could not be ruled out.

"Given that there is strong evidence that both long- and short-term exposure to particle pollutants in ambient air is harmful to health, it is likely that there is some health risk associated with exposure to underground PM," it said.

However, the authors said they did not believe travelling posed a serious risk.

Mr Peter McNaught, director of asset operations at Transport for London, said the company was committed to maintaining the cleanest air possible.

"We closely monitor dust levels on the Tube and, through a wide range of measures, ensure that particle levels are well within Health and Safety Executive guidelines," he said in a statement.

"We have already enhanced our sampling regime by including tests for additional metals and we will continue to investigate ways we can keep dust and particles to an absolute minimum." REUTERS

Globally, air pollution kills about seven million people every year, according to the WHO. Long-term exposure can affect human respiratory and inflammatory systems and lead to heart disease and cancer.

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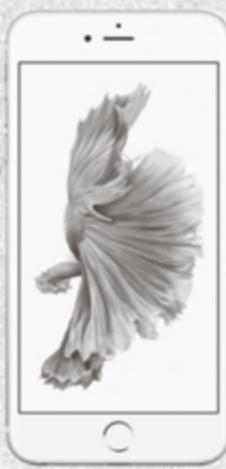
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Mid-East's biggest issue not terror, but obesity

More than 30% of adults in Arab states suffer from combination of diabetes and obesity

Gil Yaron
For The Straits Times
In Tel Aviv

Tartlets and kebabs kill more people in the Middle East than all the terrorist organisations combined.

Egypt's President Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, who is known for meddling in the smallest and most intimate affairs of his country, wants to change that now.

And so it hardly surprised anyone when a lecture by his health minister recently caused him to admonish his compatriots sternly.

"Why are we doing this to ourselves?" he shouted when Mrs Hala

Sajed presented the results of a study which showed that about 75 per cent of Egyptians were overweight, with more than 35 per cent of them morbidly so. Around 10 per cent of all minors, or 3.6 million children, were too fat.

Based on those figures, Egypt would be the fattest country in the world, according to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in Washington.

For 20 minutes on live television, Mr Sisi exhorted his people to become physically active.

Television stations should prevent obese people from appearing on programmes, he said, while urging his own prime minister to

not put on any more weight.

But it is doubtful if the President's exhortation will suffice to fix the problem. Being overweight is not an Egyptian peculiarity, but has begun to afflict the entire region.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) says 1.1 million inhabitants of the eastern Mediterranean, which covers a large part of the Arab world, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan, die from non-communicable diseases prematurely, that is, before the age of 70, every year.

One problem in particular has increased enormously: Researchers call it "diabesity", the confluence of diabetes and obesity, as defined by a body mass index greater than 30.

It affects more than 30 per cent of adults in Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Libya and the rich Gulf states.

The populations of the Arab states are thus among the most

overweight in the world.

The number of deaths from non-communicable diseases in the region in the years 2000-2015 increased by 38 per cent compared with only 25 per cent in the rest of the world, WHO says.

The reasons for this are manifold. Smoking is widespread in the Arab world, and has even increased in recent years by 10 per cent. Smokers get ever younger: In most Arab states, about 20 per cent of boys 13 to 15 years old light up already.

In addition, there is considerable air pollution in the major cities of the region, where the majority of the Arab population now lives.

This urbanisation has become an important risk factor. It has fundamentally changed the eating habits of many people. Only 38 per cent of Gulf residents still eat fresh fruit or vegetables. They consume more

and more sugar, spending US\$8.4 billion (\$11.3 billion) a year on soft drinks alone.

A sedentary lifestyle is another major factor. Studies show that 40 to 60 per cent of Arab adults do not play sports. In some cases, the rate could be even 80 per cent for children – more than in almost every other part of the world.

This could partly be explained by obvious reasons. The hot weather does not invite one to go outdoors. Urban design favours cars, making the outdoors dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.

The aversion to sport also has cultural backgrounds: Physical work is associated with low social status; convenience is a top priority. In a world where there is little leisure time and the clan acts as a central social institution, family reunions become the most important pastime – and these are usually associated with great and sumptuous food.

Some Arab states now want to fight the trend of rising obesity. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has set up the Abu Dhabi Children's Obesity Task Force to reduce their average weight by 15 per cent by next year. At the same time, the UAE wants to introduce a sugar tax of 100 per cent. A huge health conference on the subject is scheduled to take place in Dubai at the end of this month.

The wealthy, in the meantime, are looking for other ways to shed their

extra kilos. Saudi Arabia, for example, where 30 per cent of minors are overweight, has now become a centre of bariatric surgery, in which gastric bands are inserted into patients, or they have parts of their digestive tract excised.

Professor Aajed al-Katani, a Saudi surgeon, estimates that gastric resections are more frequent in the kingdom than in any other country in the world. He has carried out about 10,000 such procedures, 2,900 of them on children.

Mr Sisi wants to stem the trend by personal example. He frequently cycles through Cairo's streets to drive home the message of exercise to his countrymen. Usually on these occasions, his exhortations are accompanied by threats and insults to fat people. For example, the former general thundered recently that overweight cadets should not be promoted in the army.

One thing, however, transforms obesity into another divisive political issue in the Arab world. The risk factors affect mostly the poor. Hemmed in by corruption, mismanagement and oppression, those in the underclass live only in unhealthily neighbourhoods and feed on industrially processed, cheap food. They have no time to indulge in sports or healthy living, and are thus condemned to premature deaths.

herryaron@yahoo.com

Dakar race raises a storm



French driver Sébastien Loeb and co-driver Daniel Elena of Monaco raising a storm of dust during stage 4 of the Dakar Rally between Arequipa and Tacna, in Peru, on Thursday. Loeb, a nine-time world rally champion, suffered three punctures in his Peugeot but still moved up to sixth place. Qatar's Nasser Al-Attiyah extended his lead after winning the stage. The Toyota driver, a two-time Dakar winner, completed the 406km special timed stage with a lead of eight minutes and 55 seconds over Stephane Peterhansel, who has won 13 times. The 41st edition of the event started in Lima on Sunday and will end there next Thursday, after 10 stages. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

Poland arrests Huawei employee for alleged spying

WARSAW • Poland has arrested a Chinese employee of Huawei and a Polish national involved in cyber business on allegations of spying, local media reported yesterday, deepening the controversy over Western criticism of the Chinese telecoms equipment maker.

US intelligence agencies allege Huawei Technologies is linked to

China's government and that its equipment could contain "backdoors" for use by government spies.

No evidence has been produced publicly and the firm has repeatedly denied the claims. But the criticism has led several Western countries and companies to look into whether they should allow Huawei's equipment to be used in their

telecoms networks, straining relations with Beijing.

Polish public TV channel TVP said security services had searched the local offices of Huawei, as well as the offices of telecoms firm Orange Polska, where it said the Polish national works.

China's Foreign Ministry said it was "greatly concerned" by the re-

ports, and urged Poland to handle the case "justly".

"We are aware of the situation, and we are looking into it. We have no comment for the time being," Huawei said in a statement, adding: "Huawei complies with all applicable laws and regulations in the countries where it operates, and we require every employee to abide by

the laws and regulations in the countries where they are based."

Orange Polska said in a statement that the security agency had on Tuesday gathered materials related to an employee, whom it did not identify. The company added that it did not know if the investigation was linked to the employee's professional work, and that it would continue to

cooperate with the authorities. TVP said the security services searched the offices of Poland's telecoms regulator, the Office of Electronic Communications, but the regulator denied this.

Last December, Canada arrested top Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou, at the behest of the US authorities as part of an investigation into alleged violations of US trade sanctions, raising tensions with China amid a broader ongoing trade war between Washington and Beijing. REUTERS

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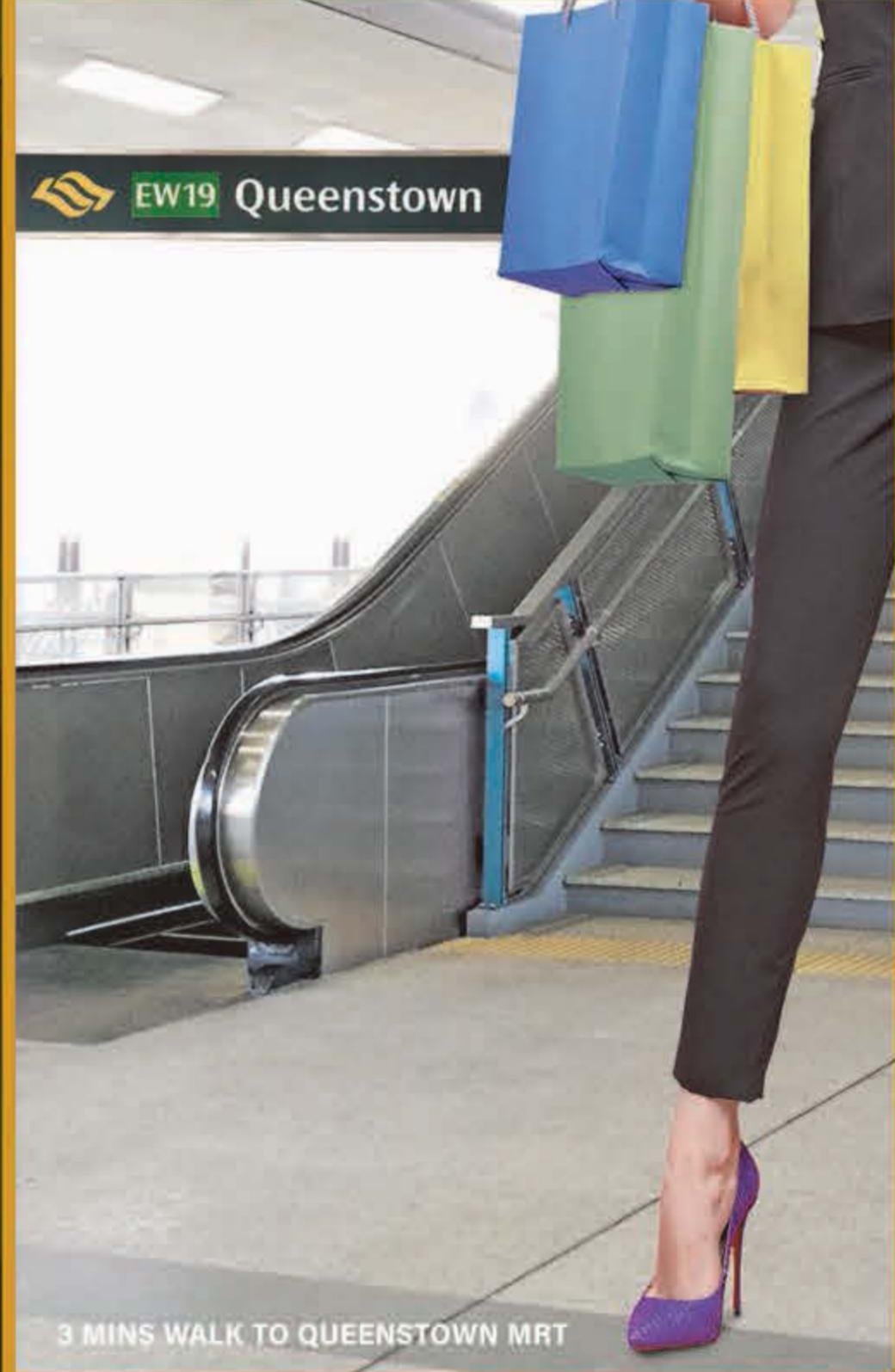
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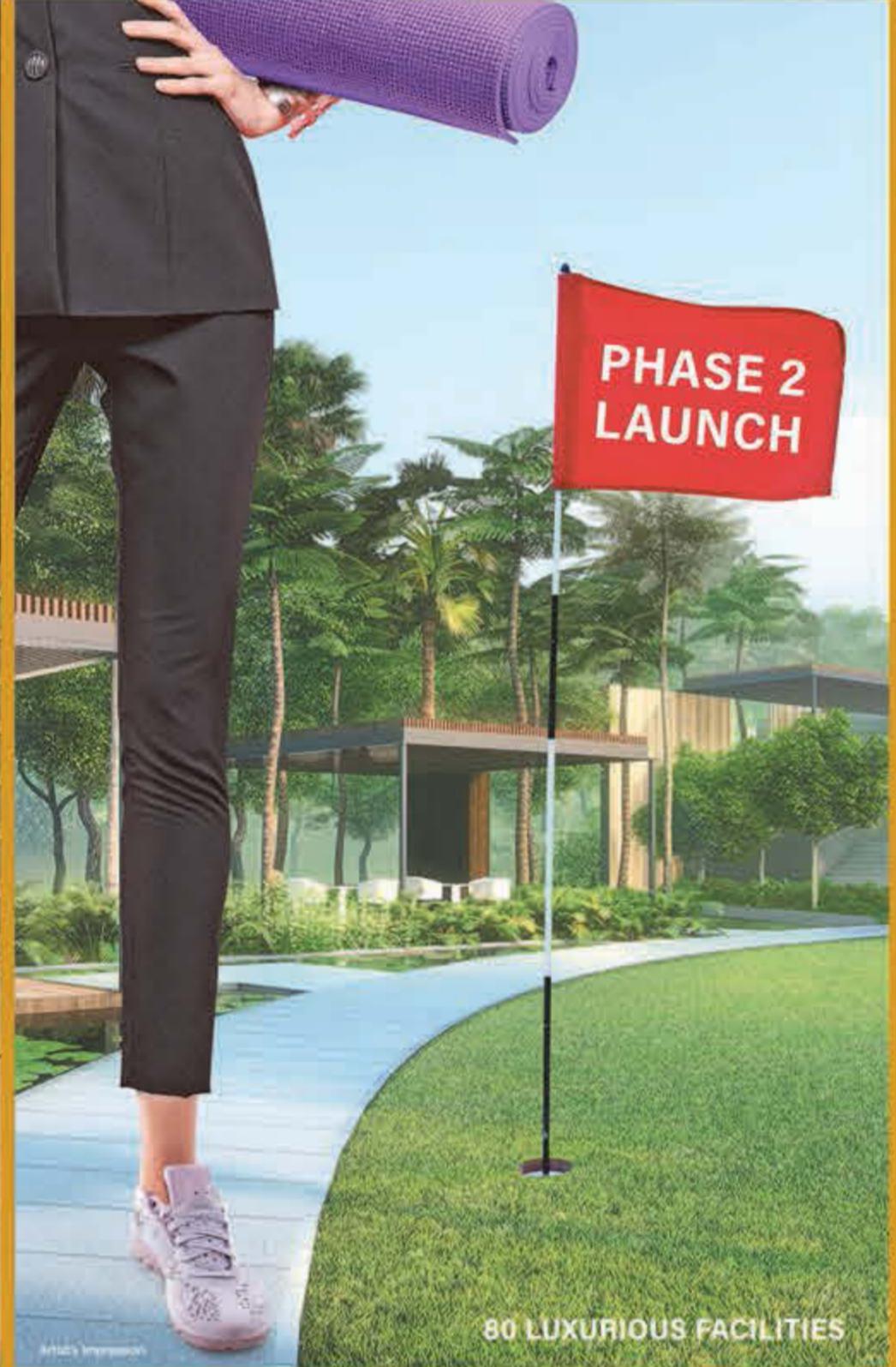
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Artist's Impression



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Developer: LN Development (Stirling) Pte Ltd (Co. Reg. No. 201612530G) - Developer's Licence No. C1247 - Tenure of Land: Leasehold (99 years lease commencing from 18 Aug 2017) - Lot No.: Lot 03894T & 03919A MK01 at Stirling Road - Approved SP No. AT16-00003-2017-SP-01 dated 2 May 2018 - Date of Notice of Vacant Possession under the S&P Agreement: No later than 30 Apr 2022 - Expected date of Legal Completion: No later than 30 Apr 2025 or 3 years from date of Vacant Possession Notice, whichever is earlier - Encumbrances: Mortgage in favour of United Overseas Bank Limited



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GAIN CITY EXPO 2019

LAST DAYS 2

ANG BAO CASHBACK
11 - 13 January | 11am - 10pm

Gain City Megastore
71 Sungei Kadut Drive S729577

Singapore EXPO Hall 6B

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N BRAND Power Bank NOW \$11	Yuanyang Steamboat NOW \$48	Rice Cooker NOW \$38	
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onefm 91.3
Date: 12 January (Saturday)
Time: 2pm - 4pm
Venue: EXPO Hall 6B

LOVE 97.2FM
Date: 13 January (Sunday)
Time: 3pm - 5pm
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11AM - 10PM • EXPO HALL 6B • GAIN CITY MEGASTORE @ SUNGEI KADUT

Actual products may vary from pictures. Images are for illustration purposes only. Special deals are limited to 1 item per customer during our 3 days (11 - 13 Jan 2019) event or on first come first serve basis. All prices listed are inclusive of GST. All advertised models, free gifts and vouchers are available on a while stocks last basis. • Credit Line/Plus hire-purchase plan are only applicable to air-con purchases. All applications are subject to credit approval. In-house Credit Line/Plus hire-purchase plan and other policies apply. • Standard HDB installation warranty applies (excludes accessories when installed). Extended warranty is inclusive of Manufacturer's warranty. Vouchers are redeemable for next purchase and not exchangeable to cash. Free vouchers are given out on a while stocks last, first come first serve basis. Gain City management reserves the rights to amend the promotion and terms and conditions without prior notice. Other terms and conditions apply. For more details on Grand Lucky Draw visit <http://www.gaincity.com/en/cr>

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SONY 43" INTERNET TV KDL-43W660F
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UP: \$899 AND: \$160 NOW: \$739

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RRP: \$1499
UP: \$1699 AND: \$710 NOW: \$989

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MITSUBISHI HEAVY Inverter System 2
2 X 12000 BTU
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UP: \$2039 AND: \$200 NOW: \$1839

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PANASONIC Inverter System 3
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UP: \$2859 AND: \$300 NOW: \$2559

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UP: \$999 AND: \$380 NOW: \$619

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UP: \$1299 AND: \$350 NOW: \$949

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UP: \$1099 AND: \$374 NOW: \$725

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UP: \$859 AND: \$360 NOW: \$499

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SONY 55" 4K ANDROID TV KD-55X900F
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LG 55" 4K OLED SMART TV OLE55B8STB
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SHARP 60" 4K UHD SMART TV
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SAMSUNG 65" UHD SMART TV UA65NU1000KXSG
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LG 65" SUPER UHD SMART TV 65SK8500PTA
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WORLD



Nine Singapore start-ups showcased their products at the Singapore Pavilion at CES 2019 located in Eureka Park, a place for start-ups to get funding and partnerships. The start-ups there have to meet requirements such as being a first-time exhibitor and showcasing a product launched on or after Jan 1 for CES 2019.

PHOTOS: TREVOR TAN, SANHO

Gadgets from Singapore at biggest show for electronics

17 S'pore tech companies take part in Las Vegas event, and Creative makes waves by winning several accolades

Trevor Tan
In Las Vegas

Some Singapore tech companies showcased their products at CES 2019, the world's biggest consumer electronics show, to as many as 180,000 industry attendees, buyers and media from 150 countries.

Some 17 tech companies from Singapore took part in the show, said Enterprise Singapore, but there are probably other Singapore-based or Singapore-linked companies whose participation the agency is not aware of, said a spokesman.

Singapore audio firm Creative made waves at this year's show, which started on Tuesday and ended yesterday.

Creative won several accolades from top industry media like AVSForum and SoundGuys, for its released and upcoming Super X-Fi (Sxfi) products. The Sxfi technology replicates the 3D audio that one gets from a finely tuned surround-sound set-up in a room, with just a pair of headphones.

At CES 2019, the main Singapore Pavilion booth was situated at the Eureka Park, which offered a platform for start-ups to get funding, partnership and even acquisitions.

There are strict requirements for start-ups to be at Eureka Park, including being a first-time exhibitor and showcasing a product launched on or after Jan 1 for CES 2019.

One of the nine Singaporean start-ups that showcased their products at Eureka Park is Whyre, a one-year-old firm that launched its Argon Transform smart helmet attachment at the show.

"It is overwhelming and absolutely thrilling knowing that you are exhibiting among the ranks of big players like Amazon and Google," said Mr Glen Ong, Whyre's chief business development officer.

"We got to meet international business entities and we are definitely going back to Singapore with a change in perspective and lessons on subject matters relating to our business," he said.

Here are five of Singapore tech products (not all are in Eureka Park) that caught the eyes.

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Creative chief Sim Wong Hoo with some of the awards the firm's Super X-Fi products won at CES 2019.

PHOTO: CREATIVE LABS

17

The number of Singapore technology companies that took part in CES 2019. Enterprise Singapore said there may be other Singapore-linked companies it is not aware of.



AIRESONE JUNIOR

US\$199 (\$269), available in June

The AireSone Junior is a smart wearable device for children aged three and above.

The device tracks breathing, heart rate and coughing when a child sleeps. It automatically sends notifications to the parents' devices when it detects anomalies in the child's respiratory and heart rate. In addition, parents can monitor the child's vitals in real time, as long

as their devices are connected to the Internet.

The AireSone Junior is shaped like a button and inserted into a cover with designs of an owl, a frog or a bear.

It can be attached to the child around the chest area using a hypo-allergenic silicone patch. The device comes with six silicone patches that are comfortable and easy to wear. Each patch can last for about two weeks.

The device is said to have a battery life of 13 hours.



ARGON TRANSFORM

US\$679, available this year

The Argon Transform is the world's first dual-camera smart helmet attachment, according to its maker. It has a front dash-cam and a rear-view camera as well as a head-up display (HUD) in front.

It comes with built-in Global Positioning System (GPS) and provides navigation prompts via the HUD. The user can also switch to the live rear-view camera feed.

The user can receive audio cues, answer calls and listen to music through its speaker and microphone system. One can toggle the HUD, answer or reject calls using a handlebar remote control.

The biggest advantage of Transform is its detachable nature. Unlike some smart helmets where users have to buy a new helmet if one is spoiled, the device can be used with a new helmet.

A crowdfunding campaign will start in around two months' time, with a US\$100,000 target.



SANHO HYPERDRIVE USB-C HUB FOR IPAD PRO 2018

US\$99, available next month

Sanho might be based in Silicon Valley, but is founded by Singaporean Daniel Chin.

The device is the world's first USB-C hub which is designed specifically for the 2018 iPad Pro. It comes with patented soft rubberised grips that secures the hub to the iPad Pro without

interfering with the Apple Smart Keyboard Folio.

The six-in-one HyperDrive Hub has an HDMI port, a USB-C port for data and power delivery, a microSD card slot, an SD card slot, a USB-A port and a 3.5mm audio jack.

Instead of having to carry multiple adaptors, users just need a HyperDrive Hub for the iPad Pro. There is an ongoing crowdfunding campaign for the device at Kickstarter and it is going for as low as US\$59.



NEWTON'S METER

US\$150, available end of this month

Weighing just 14g, the Newton's Meter is a tiny lightweight personal safety device which has an emergency button on top and is paired to a smartphone via an app.

The device is said to have artificial intelligence-based circuitry, microprocessors, GPS

and narrowband-IoT as well as built-in multiple accelerometers and sensors for fall and impact detection.

When it detects a fall or an impact, it will send an emergency SMS with real-time GPS coordinates to 10 pre-configured phone numbers. In the event of impending danger, pressing the emergency button will also send the emergency SMS.



X-MINI TWISX

\$81.90, available Q3

The X-mini Twisx looks like a water bottle complete with a cap. But this "cap" is actually X-mini's proprietary Twisx swivel knob for controls.

You twist and hold the knob to skip tracks forward or back. Pressing down the knob will pause or play music. And to change volume, you simply turn the knob left or right.

The Twisx speaker has a 12-watt triple driver system with two 50mm active drivers and a 50mm x 120mm passive radiator driver. The speaker can be used horizontally or vertically.

Users can pair up a second Twisx to create a stereo system. It is also water-resistant (IPX5 certified) and splash-proof for use outdoors. It can fit most water bottle holders on bicycles.

During a brief demo at the X-mini booth, the speaker impressed with its sound quality, given its size.

Deaths trigger calls for pill testing at music events

Five deaths at Australian music festivals in four months – latest was during New Year holiday

Jonathan Pearlman
For The Straits Times
In Sydney

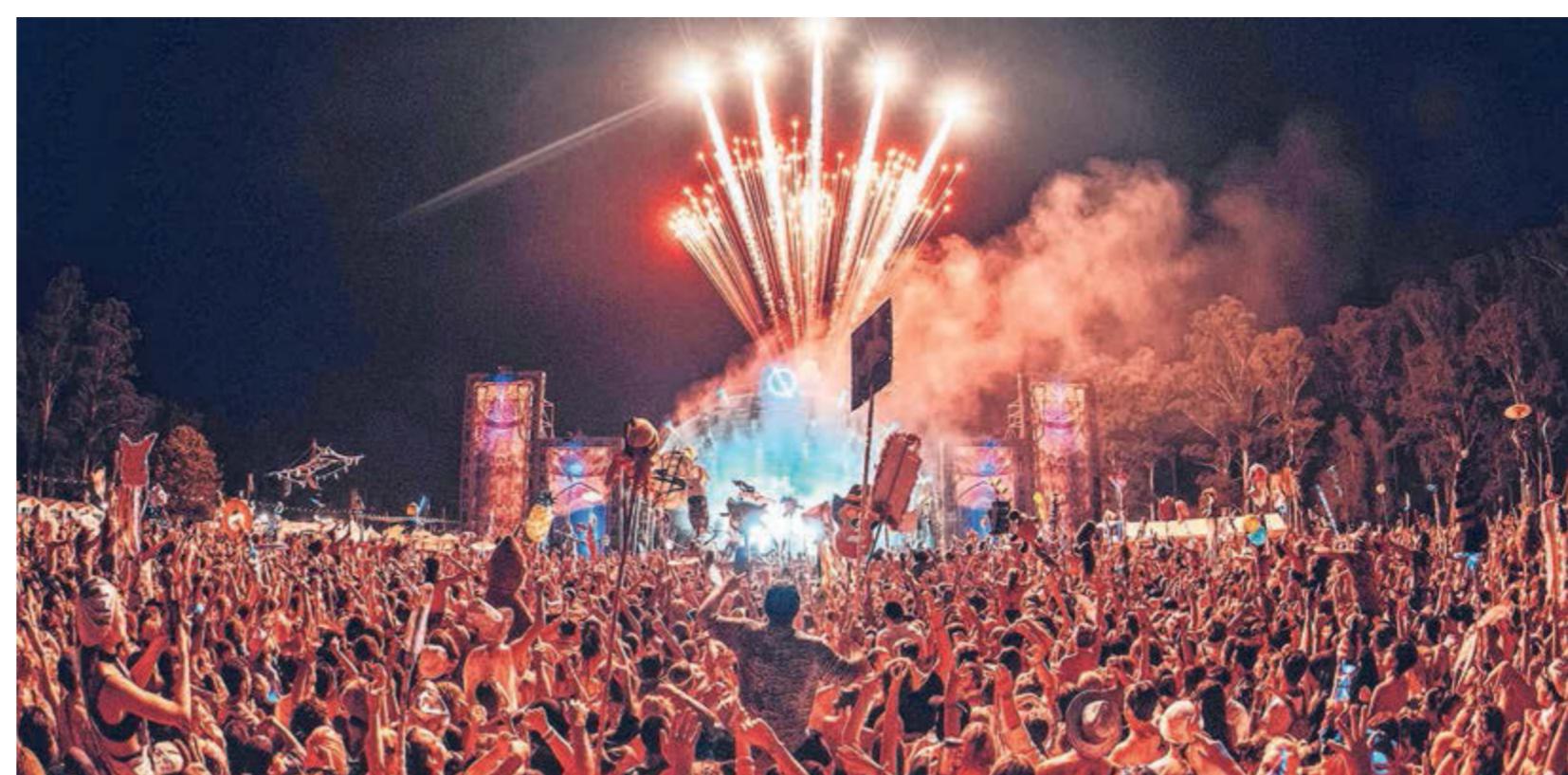
A series of deaths of young people who took illicit drugs at music festivals in Australia has led to a debate over whether to introduce pill testing at large events.

During the New Year's holiday period, a 22-year-old died after taking a pill at the Lost Paradise festival, a five-day event outside Sydney.

Several days later, a 20-year-old died during the five-day Beyond the Valley festival outside Melbourne in what was originally thought to be an overdose but is now suspected to have been a snake bite.

In the past four months, there have been up to five deaths at festivals, on top of the eight fatalities from 2014 to 2017.

The growing toll has prompted



A 22-year-old died during the New Year's holiday period after taking a pill at the Lost Paradise festival, a five-day event outside Sydney. Rates of drug use remain high in Australia – in 2016, 43 per cent of people aged 14 and older had used illicit drugs at some point, up from 38 per cent in 2001. PHOTO: LOST PARADISE/FACEBOOK

calls, including from some parents of victims, to introduce pill testing at events such as large dance festivals to allow people to have their drugs tested before taking them.

Similar testing has been introduced in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France and

other countries in Europe.

Ms Adriana Buccianti, whose 34-year-old son died after taking drugs at a festival in Western Australia in 2012, said she believed pill testing could have saved his life.

"We need to protect these young people from themselves,"

she told ABC News.

Despite some political leaders indicating they are open to pill testing, only the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has trialled it.

Ms Gladys Berejiklian, the Premier of New South Wales, the most populous state in the country, has

opposed the move, saying there was no evidence that it saved lives.

"Pill testing doesn't deal with overdoses, pill testing doesn't deal with the fact that what is safe for one person isn't safe for another person, pill testing doesn't deal with the fact that mixing drugs and alcohol is a lethal combination," she said recently.

Victoria's Health Minister, Mr Martin Foley, also opposed testing, saying it would "give people a false, and potentially fatal, sense of security about illicit drugs".

Rates of drug use remain high in Australia, particularly among young people.

In 2016, 43 per cent of people aged 14 and older in Australia had used illicit drugs at some point, up from 38 per cent in 2001.

The Australian Medical Association has backed pill-testing trials, saying tough law enforcement had failed to combat rates of drug use.

Two Australian medical experts, Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones from Melbourne University, and Professor Paul Komesaroff from Monash University, said testing should be introduced "in addition to, and not instead of, other strategies".

But other experts say pill testing is risky because it cannot check for all substances and that scraping bits of the pill for testing may miss toxic ingredients. This could result in someone taking a potentially deadly drug which they believe to be safe.

The ACT conducted a trial last April in which a pill-testing facility was set up at the Groovin the Moo festival in Canberra.

Participants signed waiver forms agreeing to have their pills or capsules tested and got wristbands showing the contents of the drug, in case they were admitted to hospital. They were informed there was no guarantee that a tested drug was safe and, following the test results, discussed their options with a counsellor. A bin was provided for those wanting to get rid of the drug.

The trial resulted in the discovery of two pills which included a potentially lethal substance, N-Ethylpentylone. Others contained toothpaste, a muscle rub and a type of spray paint – all of which, if consumed, could potentially have left people in hospital.

Following the trial, the ACT government declared it a success. It said its message to young people remained "don't do drugs" but pill testing could help to reduce harm.

jonathanpearlman@gmail.com

NOT A PANACEA

Pill testing doesn't deal with overdoses, pill testing doesn't deal with the fact that what is safe for one person isn't safe for another person, pill testing doesn't deal with the fact that mixing drugs and alcohol is a lethal combination.

“

MS GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN, the Premier of New South Wales.

SAFETY MEASURE

We need to protect these young people from themselves.

“

MS ADRIANA BUCCIANTI, whose 34-year-old son died after taking drugs at a festival in Western Australia in 2012. She believes pill testing could have saved his life.

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Divorce laws in Washington state, where Mr Jeff Bezos and his wife, MacKenzie, live, hold that property acquired during a marriage is generally divided equally. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Investors worry Bezos divorce will affect Amazon

Shares seesaw as questions arise whether he will lose control with splitting of 16% stake

NEW YORK • A day after Amazon founder Jeff Bezos announced his impending divorce, shares of the company seesawed as investors questioned how it would affect his control of the most valuable company on Wall Street and its ambitious expansion plans.

Mr Bezos, who Forbes lists as the world's richest person, worth an estimated US\$136.2 billion (\$S187.1 billion), said via Twitter on Wednesday that he and his wife of 25 years, MacKenzie, will divorce.

Amazon shares were down 0.5 per cent in afternoon trading on Thursday, after gaining earlier in the session.

The divorce throws into question how the couple will split their fortune, which includes an approximately 16 per cent ownership stake in Amazon's roughly US\$811.4 billion market capitalisation.

Divorce laws in Washington state, where they live, hold that property acquired during a marriage is generally divided equally.

Most analysts and fund managers are largely sanguine and say the divorce will not lead to any significant change in the company's leadership or its growth prospects.

Prominent short-seller Doug Kass, however, said he sold his stake in Amazon on news of the divorce. That was after initially buying a stake late last month and naming Amazon among his "best ideas list".

"Is it premature to ask what happens to Amazon when Jeff Bezos chooses to turn over the day-to-day running of the company he founded?" he said.

"His announced divorce gives

me pause for thought."

The couple have multiple residences in the US, so there is a possibility the divorce could be filed in a state where marital property is not presumed to be divided equally.

New York matrimonial lawyer Bernard Clair said, in that case, a judge would likely determine Mrs MacKenzie Bezos' share of Amazon stock based on her contribution to her husband's success, which could include helping him make important business decisions or raising their children so he could focus on work.

Mr Robert Bacarella, portfolio manager of Monetta Financial Services, said that while he is not changing his investment in Amazon, he expects other growth-focused portfolio managers may trim their stakes due to concerns about the divorce's impact.

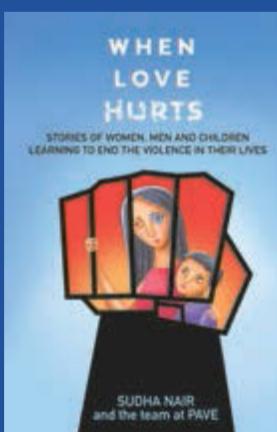
"This is such an over-owned company and this gives them an excuse to say 'Maybe I'll trim some back because it adds a new question mark,'" he said.

Mr Bacarella, however, said he is not concerned because even if Mrs MacKenzie Bezos liquidated a stake that could be as high as 8 per cent, there would be no fundamental reason behind the sale. Any impact would be short term in nature.

"Unless you worry that he will get so distracted by the divorce that he cannot manage the company, this will be a non-event," said Mr Michael Pachter, an analyst at Wedbush Securities.

"He is given control of the company because shareholders like him and his vision, not because he has 50 per cent of the stock." REUTERS

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SCIENCE

Pain-free way to test health of blood vessels

Researchers at Nanyang Poly and TTS defence non-invasive device to measure blood flow

Cheryl Teh

When he learnt how currency-counting machines use sensors and magnetic signals to identify bank notes, Dr Phua Chee Teck had a eureka moment.

Could a similar system be used to detect how blood vessels are working, he wondered.

Using a blood-pulse measurement device which uses magnets, Dr Phua, who is deputy director of sustainability engineering at Nanyang Polytechnic's (NYP's) School of Engineering, realised he could assess the blood flow rate from the radial artery, where the pulse is normally taken.

Researchers at NYP and Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTS defence have since joined hands to develop a prototype device which can test whether blood vessels can cope with reduced blood flow. It is the first of its kind to allow for endothelial dys-

function (deficiencies in a person's blood vessel system) to be detected in a non-invasive way.

"The whole device is connected wirelessly, and the data will be analysed after the 20-minute process is completed," Dr Phua said.

The device holds some promise for cardiovascular patients. In 2017, one in three deaths in Singapore was due to heart disease or stroke.

Early detection can save lives. One way is to measure if a patient's blood vessels are working well. Current methods for testing endothelial dysfunctions are invasive, and often time-consuming.

The prototype device analyses if there is damage to the small and large blood vessels, which is common in diabetic patients.

Large blood vessel damage is commonly associated with stroke and heart disease, while small blood vessel damage often results in issues with the eyes, kidneys and nerves.

The procedure is simple and requires the device's two clamps to be attached to the patient's wrists for 20 minutes.

The patient's resting pulse and blood flow are measured first before the blood flow is temporarily re-



Nanyang Polytechnic's Dr Phua Chee Teck and Tan Tock Seng Hospital's Dr Rinkoo Dalan showing how their device works. PHOTO: NANYANG POLYTECHNIC

stricted from the patient's left arm and subsequently released.

The machine will then measure the intensity at which the blood flows back into the left arm to assess if the patient's vessels are working at their optimum levels.

It took a year for the researchers to design and develop the device, and come up with an algorithm to analyse patients' results. The team also conducted clinical trials. The prototype device was developed in partnership with Dr Rinkoo Dalan, a senior consultant in endocrinology and diabetes at TTS defence.

The effort is supported by the National Health Innovation Centre and the National Healthcare Group's Centre for Medical Technologies and Innovations.

"We want to measure the elasticity of blood vessels. When blood flow is restricted and then released, blood vessels are supposed to dilate to their full size. If it is stiff, it will not dilate as much, in comparison

to flexible blood vessels," said Dr Dalan.

She said the device is also intended to be a good way of predicting whether someone is suffering from diabetes. It can differentiate between patients with severe and early diabetes. Tests of diabetic patients tend to reveal unnatural readings, which suggest that the blood vessels are inelastic.

The researchers are now looking to make the device easier for any healthcare professional to use.

They will also examine how it can be made cost-effective for widespread use. The plan is for the team to work with a local industry partner to introduce this device into the regular body check-up process at clinics.

Dr Phua and Dr Dalan are now more than three months into designing the new prototype, which will be ready in 2021.

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New award to recognise lab technicians

They are the often-overlooked workers who keep the cogs turning in every laboratory. Now, a new award aims to celebrate the work of lab technicians.

Lab technicians are a fixture in every laboratory, and help to keep labs safe, while helping researchers with their projects. They have various responsibilities - from organising lab tools and equipment to helping to record data, and ensuring accuracy while scientific research is conducted, for example.

The Asian Scientist Lab Tech of the Year 2019 competition will be launched on Monday.

An initiative of Asian Scientist Magazine, it aims to honour the valuable contributions of laboratory technicians across Singapore. It is the first of its kind here. Prizes will be given to individuals with heartwarming and inspiring stories of their struggles and sacrifices.

"Since Asian Scientist was founded in 2011, we have tried to feature the best scientists in Asia - inevitably, the Nobel laureates, chief executive officers and founders," said Dr Julian Chan, CEO of Wildtype Media Group and editor-in-chief of Asian Scientist Magazine.

"So in 2019, we decided to flip it around, and find a way to honour these unsung heroes who have made great contributions to successful scientific research."

Prizes of \$500 in cash will be awarded to 10 winners from Britain-based sponsor Abcam, along with a certificate of recognition, and a goody bag of books and magazines for each winning lab tech. The top prize is a three-day, two-night stay at the Banyan Tree Bintan, donated by Mr Ho Kwon Ping, executive chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings.

Supervisors of the winning lab techs will also win \$500 in book vouchers for their lab, to act as an incentive for them to nominate their lab techs.

The competition will run from Jan 14 to March 15. Readers can submit stories of their favourite lab technicians at AsianScientist.com/labtech.

Cheryl Teh

Why humpbacks sing – and change their tunes too

Sometimes a whale just wants to change its tune.

That's one of the things researchers have learned recently by eavesdropping on whales in several parts of the world and listening for changes in their pattern and pitch. Together, the new studies suggest that whales are not just whistling in the water, but constantly evolving a form of communication that we are only beginning to understand.

Most whales and dolphins vocalise, but dolphins and toothed whales mostly make clicking and whistling sounds. Humpbacks, and possibly bowheads, sing complex songs with repeated patterns, said Associate Professor Michael Noad of the Cetacean Ecology and Acoustics Laboratory at the University of Queensland in Australia.

Birds may broadcast their social hierarchy among song-sharing populations by allowing the dominant bird to pick the playlist and patterns. But how and why whales pass song fragments across hundreds of miles, and to thousands of animals, is far more mysterious.

The biggest question is why whales sing at all.

"The thing that always gets me out of bed in the morning is the function of the song," Prof Noad said. "I find humpback song fascinating from the point of view of how it's evolved." The leading hypothesis is that male humpbacks – only the males sing – are trying to attract females. But they may also switch tunes when another male is nearby, apparently to assess a rival's size and fitness, said Prof Noad, the senior author of one of four new papers on whale songs.

Why the humpbacks' musical patterns tend to be more complex than those of other whales is also a bit murky. Prof Noad suggested that the development may be the result of "runaway selection". Early humpbacks with complex songs were so much more successful at mating that they gained a substantial evolutionary advantage over their brethren with simpler vocalisations. This led to some very large, sometimes very noisy animals.

In one of the new studies, led by scientists at the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society, researchers tracked humpbacks singing along the east and west coasts of Africa, comparing songs sung by those off the coast of Gabon to those near Madagascar.

The study, published in the journal Royal Society Open Science, confirmed that the two populations interact, noting overlap in their vo-



A new study has found an unexpected singing pattern among humpbacks: Once their songs reach a certain level of complexity, they drop that tune entirely and pick up a new, simpler one. PHOTO: AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

calisations. The researchers recorded songs annually from 2001 to 2005 using hand-held hydrophones aboard boats.

"Male humpback whales within a population tend to sing the same song type, but it's continuously changing and evolving over time. It's thought to be one of the best examples of cultural evolution in the animal kingdom."

The idea of using songs to look at population mixing and connectivity is relatively new, she said, and has been proven valuable only in the past few years.

Some animals repeat sounds more than others, some sing "aberrant" tunes, and juveniles may hum jingles altogether different from the adults. Humpbacks also alter their tunes over time.

One reason might be novelty – for themselves or nearby females. "If I was swimming up with 15,000 whales and all the males were

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Male humpback whales within a population tend to sing the same song type, but it's continuously changing and evolving over time. It's thought to be one of the best examples of cultural evolution in the animal kingdom.

“

DR MELINDA REKDAHL, a marine conservation scientist at the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society.

singing the same song, it would drive me crazy," Dr Rekdahl said. Maybe the "females are just, like, give me a new song!" she said.

Two additional recent studies examined how the songs change, sea-

sonally and across years.

In one paper, Dr Jenny Allen, who was a doctoral student with Prof Noad, found an unexpected pattern among humpbacks. Once their songs reach a certain level of complexity, humpbacks drop that tune entirely and pick up a new, simpler one. Her study, the first to quantify the complexity of the songs, was published in *Proceedings Of The Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*.

"That clear oscillating pattern was something we didn't really expect," said Dr Allen, now a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Queensland and a lecturer at Griffith University in Australia.

Assuming that the songs are meant to attract females, "it might be that a brand-new song is a bit sexier than continuing to sing the complicated version of the old song", she said. But because it's hard to memorise a whole new song, "they're simplifying it to make it easy to learn so much new material all at once". Humpback songs have a lot of repeating patterns, which

might make them easier to remember, just as rhymes at the end of poetry lines aid memorisation, Dr Allen said. She also found a lot of predictability in the patterns, and compared them to pop songs based on the same four chords.

In another new paper, researchers at the University of Brest in France found that the pitch of Antarctic blue whale, pygmy blue whale and fin whale vocalisations fell from 2007 to 2016 at various recording sites in the southern Indian Ocean.

Because of a whale's anatomy, a louder call is higher in pitch, and a quieter one is lower. Essentially, the whales have gotten slightly quieter, said Ms Emmanuelle Leroy, now a research fellow at the University of New South Wales and an author of the new research.

"Blue whales are mostly solitary, so to communicate across large distance, they need to produce really low-frequency and high-intensity calls," she said. "The calls are really loud and will propagate over a few hundreds of kilometres." Her team

has two hypotheses to explain the drop in pitch across years. With the populations rebounding since the end of commercial whaling, perhaps the whales don't need their calls to carry as far to be heard by others.

Or perhaps with oceans acidifying because of climate change, the calls are naturally carrying farther, allowing the whales to reduce their volume. The team does not believe the change in pitch is tied directly to human activity.

Their research, published in the *Journal of Geophysical Research: Oceans*, also showed that the call pitch of the Antarctic blue whales varies across seasons, with pitches increasing 0.1 hertz during the spring and summer and dropping at other times.

"That might be the whales' response to the loud cleaving of icebergs in the spring and summer. These extremely loud sounds – like the cracking of ice in a glass – make it harder for the whales to hear one another, so they crank up the volume," Ms Leroy said. *NYTIMES*

No safety in numbers for pin-striped tit babbler

Despite healthy population levels in S'pore, species has low genetic diversity, study finds

Audrey Tan
Environment Correspondent

An old adage claims that there is safety in numbers.

But for the pin-striped tit babbler (*Mixornis gularis*), a small brown bird that can often be seen flitting on the lower branches of trees in parks and forest edges in Singapore, this may not be the case.

Despite their large numbers, this species has a startlingly low genetic diversity, a new study led by a National University of Singapore (NUS) scientist has found.

A low genetic diversity in a population could have many repercussions, including the possibility of the animals developing harmful mutations due to inbreeding, and a higher susceptibility to disease or environmental change.

This could eventually result in an elevated risk of extinction in an area, said Mr David Tan, a research assistant at NUS' Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum and the lead author of the study.

Mr Tan estimates the number of pin-striped tit babblers in Singapore at 9,000, making them one of the few woodland-dependent songbird species to have maintained healthy population levels in Singapore, despite the urbanisation and forest clearance over the years.

On the surface, this paints a rosy picture of the species' resilience and ability to adapt.

But a different perspective emerges when the layers are peeled away – as the scientists did, when they delved into the genetic make-up of the insectivorous birds through the analysis of blood and tissue samples taken from 46 babblers across different forest patches in Singapore.

By analysing the genetic material in the samples, scientists were able to follow the breadcrumbs and trace the trail of genetic decline to about 50 years ago, when large parts of Singapore were developed and urbanised, with many plantations and wooded areas being replaced by concrete structures and buildings.

"A key finding was that even though the babblers are very abundant, that is no indication of their population health, and that even animals adapted to disturbed and degraded habitats can be affected by fragmentation," said Mr Tan, who worked on the study with six other scientists in Singapore and Sweden. The study was recently published in the scientific journal *Nature Scientific Reports*.

One possible reason for the babblers' low genetic diversity is that they are unable to travel far in search of mates, due to their short wings and sedentary habits. When vegetated areas are broken up into fragments, the babblers have greater difficulty moving beyond the isolated plots to meet other breeding partners, said Mr Tan.

He added: "The babblers behave very much like mammals. Even though they have wings, they don't disperse far and they live largely in the mid-to-lower part of the forest."

The 46 babblers were captured, tagged and subsequently released in forest patches across Singapore's north-south axis.

Based on the data, the study also found that babblers from Admiralty Park were significantly more inbred than those caught in other areas, such as the Southern Ridges and the Central Catchment Nature Reserve.

This suggests Admiralty Park is starting to be isolated from the rest of the forest patches – even though the park is only 2km away from the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, as the crow flies, said Mr Tan.

"This shows that spatial layout of wooded areas plays a significant role in affecting the flow of genetic material between Singapore's forests," he said, adding that assessments of the impacts of fragmenta-

tion for various species could be useful in informing long-term conservation strategies, since different species may respond differently to such stressors.

The National Parks Board (NParks), custodian of Singapore's



A pin-striped tit babbler at Kent Ridge Park. By analysing genetic material in samples taken from 46 babblers here, scientists traced the trail of genetic decline to about 50 years ago, when large parts of Singapore were urbanised. PHOTO: DAVID TAN

biodiversity, said it was aware of Mr Tan's study, and will take the findings into consideration in planning and developing long-term biodiversity conservation strategies.

Mr Lim Liang Jim, group director of NParks' National Biodiversity

Centre, said species targeted for conservation are identified based on their conservation status and distribution, with priority given to threatened, endemic species and rediscovered species, or those previously thought to be extinct.

Species recovery efforts are just part of Singapore's broader nature conservation masterplan, which includes the conservation of key habitats and improving connectivity, Mr Lim said.

NParks has a suite of measures to

IMPACT OF FRAGMENTATION

A key finding was that even though the babblers are very abundant, that is no indication of their population health, and that even animals adapted to disturbed and degraded habitats can be affected by fragmentation.

MR DAVID TAN, a research assistant at NUS' Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum and the lead author of a study that was recently published in the journal *Nature Scientific Reports*. Mr Tan estimates the number of pin-striped tit babblers in Singapore to be 9,000.

improve connectivity, including the planting of nature ways – roadside greenery that can function as corridors for animals – and the "rewilding" of the Rail Corridor.

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OPINION

The Straits Times says

Overcoming boundaries to better ties

Hopes of a resolution to the air and maritime tensions between Singapore and Malaysia have been raised after a meeting between their foreign ministers earlier this week. The separate disputes, over territorial waters off Tuas and airspace management over southern Johor, put a strain on ties between two countries which have had close and strong relations rooted in geography, history, society and culture. Yet, for several weeks recently, the longstanding relationship was again overshadowed by dissension that touched on Singapore's territorial integrity, including the sight of Malaysian government vessels anchored in Singapore's waters. Singaporeans could have been forgiven for wondering what had gone wrong so seri-

ously, so suddenly. That ominous mood was lifted with the announcement on Tuesday that Malaysia will suspend immediately its permanent restricted area over Pasir Gudang for flights, while Singapore will do the same for new aircraft landing procedures for Seletar Airport. The arrangement will be for a month in the first instance. Also, the transport ministers of both countries should meet soon for discussions to ensure the safety and efficiency of civil aviation. On maritime issues, a high-level working group will be set up to study and discuss legal and operational matters in order to de-escalate the situation on the ground, and provide a basis for further discus-

sions and negotiations. Oddly, amid this sign of progress, came the social media posting on Wednesday of Johor Menteri Besar Osman Sapian visiting Malaysian government vessels moored in Singapore's territorial waters.

Looking ahead, it would not be wrong to hope that bilateral disputes do not appear on the horizon with unwarranted frequency. The proposed Instrument Landing System procedures for Seletar Airport, for instance, had been shared with Malaysia in December 2017. But in spite of repeated reminders, Singapore received no substantive response until late November last year when Malaysia raised objections. On the maritime front, it would have been prudent for Malaysia to

have used diplomatic channels to tell Singapore of any reservations or concerns it may have had – instead of suddenly and unilaterally extending the Johor Baru port limits to encroach into Singapore's territorial waters off Tuas, and to then have Malaysian government vessels intrude and anchor in those very waters.

It is not unnatural for neighbours to have disputes. But they owe it to each other to take their wider, mutual interests into consideration. Bilateral ties are best sustained by focusing on common causes. Singapore has been open about wanting to maintain good relations with Malaysia, and welcomes reciprocity from across the Causeway. The latest agreement is a step in that direction.

By Invitation

Why cost-benefit analysis is useful for regulatory reform

From assessing air quality to determining the value of damages in law suits, cost-benefit analysis provides a framework that can also guide policymaking



Euston Quah

For The Straits Times

In 1988, I began my full academic career at the National University of Singapore. I taught environmental economics and later established a new graduate course on cost-benefit analysis (CBA). At the time, CBA was not the main tool used for evaluation by the public sector.

Instead, something called cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) was the main instrument for analysis of projects, programmes and policies. It was used widely at the time, and is still relevant now.

While the terms sound very similar, there is one crucial difference between the two. CEA ranks projects and policies in terms of which yields the least cost to achieve a certain targeted outcome.

But it cannot indicate whether something is more worthwhile to do. Conventional CEA usually does not measure social costs, unlike CBA. An example of a social cost is a cost such as traffic congestion that is borne by society. CEA may, for example, analyse a new redevelopment project in an area in terms of the value it adds to the economy and the increase in land use efficiency – but may not take into account the effect of congestion in the area. In that sense, CBA provides a more holistic appraisal of a project or policy.

In such circumstances, CEA falls short of CBA, as it does not capture all the costs. Furthermore, CEA provides no information or evaluation as to why certain policies or projects should be adopted in terms of benefits. Rather, the benefits are taken as a given.

BACKGROUND TO CBA

Why this slightly academic discussion of cost-benefit analysis today?

It is my belief that there is a need to return to some rigour in discussing the pros and cons of

projects and policies, at a time when so much public discussion is driven by opinion and political posturing, rather than more objective assessments.

In a recent book by the celebrated Harvard law professor Cass Sunstein, *The Cost-Benefit Revolution*, he explains why policies should be considered carefully on the basis of their costs and benefits, rather than on mere subjective opinions, lobby groups and intuition.

Cost-benefit analysis began life in the United States Flood Control Act of 1936 which required government agencies to use CBA to estimate benefits over costs.

A series of standardised CBA practices was provided by the then US Bureau of the Budget in the 1950s, followed by the Transport Ministry of the United Kingdom in evaluating highways and airports in the 1960s.

International agencies followed in deciding whether to support some projects in developing countries using CBA.

From the mid-1990s, government agencies in Asia became more interested in knowing whether there were significant net benefits of a proposed project or programme. With rising demands for various expenditure projects, a careful consideration of which projects to support given constraints on budget became paramount.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS AND REGULATORY REFORMS

Regulatory reforms in environmental, health and safety regulations have become more prevalent.

These days, another instrument, called regulatory impact analysis (RIA), has come into fashion. RIA takes into account distributional and equity considerations, going beyond pure economic considerations. In that sense, it is in fact a kind of cost-benefit analysis.

CBA in its complete form covers similar ground with its repertoire of mandatory questions. These include: Who is the reference target group; what and which costs and benefits have to be accounted for; how to estimate these costs and benefits; whether equity considerations are important

(especially relevant to developing

countries); what to do with uncertainties over long-term policies and projects; and what investment criteria to use to calculate the overall viability of the project.

FROM AIR QUALITY TO LEGAL CASES

One area where CBA has played an important regulatory role is air quality.

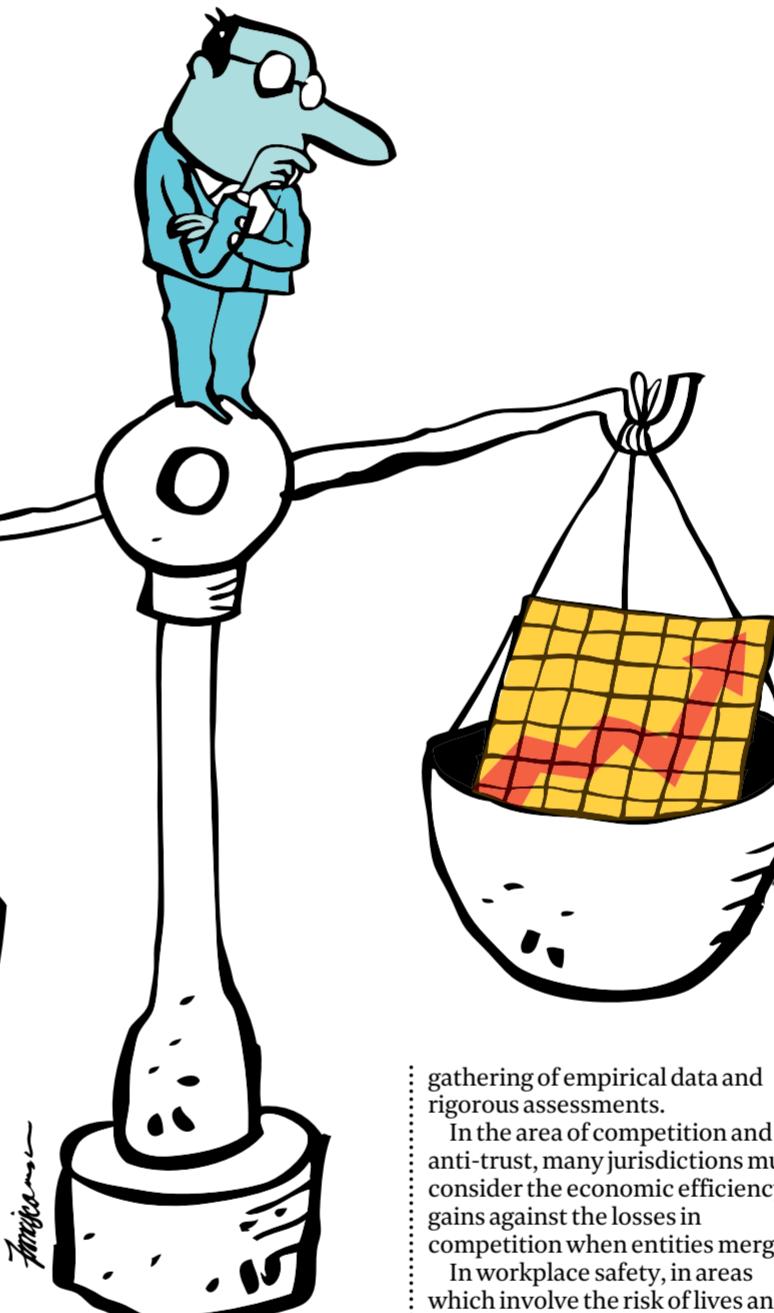
Some years ago, when the World Health Organisation (WHO) raised its guidelines for air quality, making them more stringent, countries all over the world, including Singapore, had to consider whether they would implement the new guidelines.

Fortunately, this was not an all-or-nothing choice as there were several interim air quality levels provided by WHO. Countries had to consider the cost of implementing these guidelines, such as the higher costs of doing business as well as of living. This in turn meant higher transport cost, and higher monitoring and enforcement costs.

If some countries follow the guidelines and others do not, those which do may incur higher costs and lose cost competitiveness.

However, these higher costs have to be compared with the benefits of having better air quality, such as better health and increased productivity. A cleaner environment can also boost tourism and make a city more attractive to skilled manpower. CBA provides a framework for a careful analysis of these benefits and costs in meeting the various interim guidelines.

In yet another example, in 2012, the US' environmental protection agency and transportation department came up with plans to increase the fuel economy of cars.



This regulatory reform was shown to have huge positive net benefits. Such benefits include savings in fuel and time costs for motorists in not having to refill frequently and perhaps higher work productivity. The lower fuel consumption also means less environmental pollution. These benefits would have to be compared against the increased cost of manufacturing such fuel-economy cars.

Careful CBA can benefit many areas of policy through the

Conventional cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) usually does not measure social costs, unlike cost-benefit analysis (CBA)...

In that sense, CBA provides a more holistic appraisal of a project or policy.

Furthermore, CEA provides no information or evaluation as to why certain policies or projects should be adopted in terms of benefits.

Rather, the benefits are taken as a given.

industries – and how does this translate into monetary returns for society?

These issues and questions can to a large extent be answered by CBA, and there are many more. CBA, however, is a normative tool for decision-making in that it prescribes what should be done, but does not specify how it should be carried out.

LIMITATIONS OF CBA

While it provides a good objective framework, CBA does have limitations.

For example, if it is used to analyse a long-term policy, uncertainty over the estimated benefits and costs in the future will affect the quality of its assessments. Also, concerns for intra-versus inter-generational equity often involves some philosophical issues.

The choice of methods for valuing benefits and costs can attract some controversy. The lack of local or indigenous studies may render some measurements of benefits and costs challenging.

The costs of doing a full and proper CBA often requires expertise, funding and time.

And while the principles of CBA do not vary between developed and developing countries, differences in labour, output and financial markets between these countries mean methodologies for measuring benefits and costs have to be adapted to suit the conditions of these countries.

It is not the answer to a question that is most important, but rather the process of getting to the answer that matters more. And because governments' budgets have limitations, CBA provides a strong argument for rational and informed decision-making.

As Professor Sunstein wrote in a Bloomberg article: "It is not exactly news that we live in an era of polarised politics, but Republicans and Democrats have come to agree on one issue, the essential need for cost-benefit analysis in the regulatory process. In fact, cost-benefit analysis has become part of the informal constitution of the US regulatory state. This is an extraordinary development."

In Singapore, the Centre for Public Project Management unit was established in 2011, within the Ministry of Finance, and supports the ministry in ensuring an efficient and effective use of public resources. However, this centre provides advice only on major development projects.

What is perhaps needed is an extension of this to encompass CBA of proposed or amended regulations across a variety of public policies. CBA should also be considered for use by financial regulators.

Besides rationality, CBA is often hailed as a check on arbitrary and incomplete regulatory actions.

As budgets continue to be constrained and demands for expenditure become greater, the need for justification for new projects and policies means that CBA is here to stay.

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Field notes



MORE FREEDOM

My life is better here... I have freedom and control over my own work.

“

MR DAICHI HYAKUNO, who was working in Osaka but became one of the contractors for Irodori, Kamikatsu's leaf business, in 2013. He now oversees a 3,000 sq m plot of land and also grows and sells tea leaves.

Kamikatsu resident Yukio Nishikage plucking maple leaves for sale. The 81-year-old widow has found a new lease of life working with Irodori, the market leader in tsumamono.
ST PHOTOS: WALTER SIM

Rural towns woo city slickers with 'creative depopulation'

Fibre optic roll-out in Tokushima breathes new life into region



Walter Sim

Japan Correspondent
In Kamiyama and
Kamikatsu (Tokushima)

The allure of working and living in the peaceful environs of nature, coupled with super-fast Internet speeds, drew Web entrepreneur Kiyoharu Hirose, 46, to the mountainous town of Kamiyama in western Japan's Tokushima prefecture.

The city slicker, who grew up in Osaka, first fell for Japan's rural regions in his 20s when he quit his office job and went on a bike tour around the country.

In 2005, he set up Web systems planning and design firm Kinetoscope in Osaka, but was so taken with Kamiyama during his first visit in 2012 that he not only promptly set up a satellite office in the town of 5,319 people, but also uprooted his wife and two sons.

Kamiyama is leveraging its rustic charm to fight the twin threats of an ageing population and rural depopulation, and has adopted a policy it terms "creative depopulation". It is seeking to stymie the decline in residents by wooing young newcomers like the Hiroses, who in turn can stimulate a circular local economy. And this appears to have borne fruit.

In recent years, a cafe, pizzeria, bistro, bakery and boutique guesthouse have opened in an increasingly gentrified town. Last July, it welcomed a new craft-beer brewery run by Mr Manus Sweeney, 38, who hails from Ireland.

Mr Hirose shut his Osaka office in 2015 and now operates solely from a wooden hut in Kamiyama: "I didn't see any meaning in keeping the Osaka office when the rent here is five times cheaper, and I still get

most of my clients from Osaka and Tokyo." He also heads a business called SHIZQ that makes craft objects such as cups, plates and lampshades from Kamiyama cedar.

Using the wood from these local trees also helps the environment. There is an over-abundance of such trees, which block sunlight with their thick foliage. As a result, the volume of river water running through the town has decreased by two-thirds in the last 30 years, and ground vegetation has withered and the soil hardened.

His wife works with him while their boys, aged 13 and 11, attend school. "Our lifestyles are now very rich and we are very content. While I don't want to deny city life, I find a barren sense to it - you work, get stressed, spend money, feel pressure to lose weight, go on a diet, get more stressed, and then drink every night," Mr Hirose says.

TECH VALLEY

Kinetoscope is one of 16 firms to have set up shop in the town, and at the heart of Kamiyama's renewal was happenstance and a bit of clever marketing.

In 2005, the prefecture of Tokushima, within which the town lies, decided to tap national grants to install fibre optic cables. This came as Tokyo sought to narrow an information gap between rural and urban areas, and as the prefecture was gearing up for a shift from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting.

The move was welcomed by a Kamiyama-based non-profit group called Green Valley, whose community-building efforts over two decades include an annual artists-in-residence programme - over 70 artists from around the world have taken part - and a new chef-in-residence scheme. Green Valley seized the chance to market Kamiyama as the ideal location for young creatives and Web businesses seeking to launch satellite offices.

Its director Shinya Ominami, says: "Just because there is ICT infrastructure does not mean you will get ICT (information and communications technology) companies. It is important to see the big picture, the potential of local communities."

In so doing, Kamiyama offers homes that happen to be vacant to attract companies, while also

providing co-working spaces for firms with fewer employees.

Mr Daisuke Motohashi, 41, who was born in Saitama in the Greater Tokyo region, is the sole local representative for Tokyo-based IT firm Dunksoft. He tells The Straits Times: "I came wanting the chance to work on my laptop while soaking my feet in the river, and with Amazon, you can get next-day delivery no matter where you are."

Osaka native Tetsu Sumita, 56, meanwhile, has been working out of a refurbished 95-year-old traditional Japanese home since 2013. Mr Sumita had in 2001 founded Plat-Ease, a Tokyo firm that does video production and works with major film studios to process film into digital metadata for storage. He says: "This is such a rural area but it is such an Internet paradise. Our Internet speeds are much faster than Tokyo's or Osaka's."

The firm has 90 employees in Tokyo and 16 in Kamiyama. They can choose whether to work in Tokyo or Kamiyama, making it a huge plus for Mr Taizo Tamagawa, 41, a Tokushima native who chose to return to be near his elderly parents.

Kamiyama is aware it is difficult to reverse the dwindling population, given the falling national population and appeal of big metropolitan cities. Town officials estimate that in the worst scenario, the population would drop to 1,145 in 2060, while the number of children in each school grade would fall from 26 to three.

Going by the current trend, the likely population in 2060 will be 1,983 - well short of its target of 3,197, which would require at least 44 new residents a year. But Kamiyama deputy mayor Fumio Ono draws the line at using subsidies as an incentive, saying: "If people come for money, they will leave when the money is no longer there."

PLUCKING LEAVES

Nearby Kamikatsu also faces the same depopulation problem, despite its claim to fame as Japan's first town to make a Zero Waste Declaration (see sidebar), and as the market leader in tsumamono, or the seasonal leaves and flowers used as ornamental garnishes in Japanese cuisine.

Kamikatsu - Japan's fifth smallest out of 743 towns, with 1,556 people - has become a case study for active ageing with its leaf business, known as Irodori. The average age of its 200 farmers, who work as contractors, picking leaves from their gardens or backyards upon receiving an order, is 70 years old. The oldest is 92.

Maple leaves are popular in autumn, and the nanten evergreen shrub is in demand over the New Year as it sounds like the word that means to "overcome misfortune".

Ms Yukiko Nishikage, 81, who is widowed, says she first got into the business 26 years ago, and was "surprised by how much money a box of flowers can fetch". A packet of 10 leaves can fetch anywhere between 300 yen and 1,500 yen (\$S3.70 and \$S18.70), depending on the plant's rarity and whether it is in season. The lifelong Kamiyama resident works from 8am to 3pm daily, and says that by keeping busy, she feels motivated and hopes to work until she is 100 years old.

The agricultural business has also won over young people like Ms Rina Mizusawa, 28, from Kanagawa, south of Tokyo, and Mr Daichi Hyakuno, 33, who was working in Osaka. Both grew jaded with their



Web entrepreneur Kiyoharu Hirose was so taken with Kamiyama during a visit in 2012 that he uprooted his wife and two sons to move to the town.



Mr Daichi Hyakuno tending to a field of wasabi leaves. He has been working with Irodori in Kamikatsu since quitting his job in Osaka in 2013.

Fighting depopulation

As Japan ages and more youth move to big cities, rural Japan is struggling to stem the population decline.



dead-end office jobs, and were looking for work closer to nature. Ms Mizusawa moved in 2015 to work as a coordinator for Irodori, while Mr Hyakuno became one of the firm's contractors in 2013.

Mr Hyakuno now oversees a 3,000 sq m plot of land and, besides Irodori, also grows and sells tea leaves. He says: "My life is better here... I have freedom and control over my own work."

But the likes of Mr Hyakuno and Ms Mizusawa are the exception, though Kamikatsu mayor Yasushi Hanamoto says creating a compact town might be key to revitalisation:

"Farming is hard work and that alone will not be enough to attract people - we need to be able to provide comprehensive services like good healthcare, better education opportunities and better transport infrastructure."

This might not happen fast enough for Mr Hyakuno, a divorcee with two young boys aged three and two. "Just because I am here today

doesn't necessarily mean I will be living here for much longer," he says. "I'm concerned for my children's education - if they want to play sports or learn a skill, there aren't too many options in rural regions."

RUSTIC APPEAL

Still, he says, it is "easy to raise young children in the town" due to the community spirit, with his neighbours taking care of his children when he is out in the field.

Kamiyama residents, too, offer similar testimonies. Mr Sumita, who has a seven-month-old son, says: "I lived in Tokyo for more than 30 years but I didn't know my neighbours... Here, I know everyone in the 16 satellite companies and all their family members."

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ST SCAN TO WATCH
Kamikatsu farmers pluck leaves for active ageing

Small town with big recycling dreams

KAMIKATSU (Tokushima) • It may be a small town far away from cities, but the 1,556 residents of Kamikatsu in western Japan are at the vanguard of a movement to reduce the waste they produce.

The town captured global attention in 2003 by being the first Japanese municipality to make a Zero Waste Declaration. Residents sort their waste into 45 different categories, as part of a bold pledge to reduce waste to zero by 2020.

However, with just one year to go, they are falling short of this target. This is despite achieving a recycling rate of 81 per cent as at the year ending March 2017, from more than 300 tonnes of garbage disposed. This is second only to the 85 per cent that the town of Osaki, with 13,200 residents, in Kagoshima prefecture, southern Japan, achieved.

In Kamikatsu, townsfolk separate their waste into 45 categories, including organic waste, aluminium cans, newspapers, magazine paper, clean plastic, dirty plastic, styrofoam and batteries.

And residents can drop off unwanted reusables at a collection point for second-hand goods, where they can also take home other people's items.

Mayor Yasushi Hanamoto says the town is not giving up on the zero waste goal, but confesses he feels it might be unrealistic even in five to 10 years.

"Some things are not recyclable, so we need to urge people to use fewer of those items," he says. "And unfortunately, the total amount of waste has not been reduced - we have a culture of over-packaging and mass consumption, and people still tend to discard things quite casually."

Still, the town has come a long way since the 1990s, when waste was burned in open fires and where an incinerator had to be shut down due to its toxic emissions.

Ms Sonoe Fujii, 38, a director on the board of local non-profit Zero Waste Academy, says many residents still find waste segregation "very troublesome", but have been incentivised by a reward scheme, in which points earned can be used to redeem everyday items at retailers.

They are also told that unrecyclable waste is processed using taxpayers' money, at the expense of other policies like education and welfare.

What is more important than achieving zero waste, she says, is forging mindsets and building a circular society for future generations. "If it becomes too high a cost burden for a small town like ours - there are materials that are too costly to process unless in bulk - or if it gets to a point where we end up forcing residents, then all this is meaningless because the pledge will just be a means to an end."

Walter Sim

Trump right to seek an end to US' wars

Jon Finer and Robert Malley

There is no shortage of policies and decisions made by Mr Donald Trump worth criticising, but since the earliest days of his presidential campaign, he has expressed at least one belief that deserves to be encouraged, not denigrated: The desire to disentangle the United States from costly overseas conflicts.

Mr Trump's non-interventionist impulse has always fit uncomfortably with the team he assembled, particularly the latest, more hawkish iteration in his ever-shifting foreign policy cast. For a time, he grudgingly deferred, allowing conflicts to escalate in virtually every theatre he inherited.

Recently, his preferences seemed to prevail, at least momentarily, as he tweeted his decision to withdraw 2,000 American troops from Syria and suggested he would do the same with as many as 7,000 troops from Afghanistan.

Since then, a bewildering public tug of war between the President and his national security team has left a trail of confusion.

It remains unclear whether the US is withdrawing from Syria right away or gradually; whether it will wait until the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is wholly defeated; or if it believes that is already the case; whether the US will protect its Syrian Kurdish allies, somehow; and whether it will remain committed to its goal of ending Iran's presence in Syria.

The absence of anything akin to a decision-making process in the administration is not surprising. The surprise is that among the most vocal critics of Mr Trump's withdrawal announcement have been not just Republican hawks but also a chorus of voices on the left.

Progressive opponents of Trumpism should resist the urge to do so over the wrong transgressions. We may not know

what the policy actually is until Mr Trump implements it, but on Syria and Afghanistan, his initial instinct – to do less, with less – was correct. It is his execution, timing and inability to leverage his decisions for the best possible terms that were damaging.

In Syria, whatever one's view of the tragic and long-debated trajectory of the conflict or past policy decisions, the US has few remaining, achievable interests at stake: preventing ISIS from regaining territorial control, protecting the predominantly Kurdish forces on whom Washington relied to do most of the counter-terrorist fighting, and supporting its allies in their efforts to defend against threats emanating from Syrian territory.

The success of none of those goals will be determined by a relatively small, long-term military presence.

Mr Trump misled the country by claiming that ISIS has been defeated. But the argument that American boots on the ground are needed to address its remaining strongholds is a recipe for a perpetual presence, since the terrorist group represents a generational threat that can be countered and contained but not soon wholly vanquished.

In truth, many on the right who denounced Mr Trump's announcement did so principally because they see Syria as a venue for confronting Iran.

But that is chasing an illusory and dangerous goal: It is hard to see how a few thousand American troops could counter tens of thousands of Iranian and Iranian-backed forces, aligned both with Moscow and President Bashar al-Assad's regime that has largely won the civil war.

A chorus of criticism inevitably greeted Mr Trump's recent statement that Iranian forces can do what they want in Syria. Yet read as a statement of fact rather than the extension of a green light, he stumbled upon a self-evident truth: Notwithstanding Israel's successful efforts to limit Iran's importation of advanced weaponry into Syria,

Teheran's position in the country is essentially secure.

Mr Trump is correct that the better course is to extricate the US from Syria, but his fatal error has been in its implementation. Most egregiously, his snap decision during a telephone call with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey betrayed America's Kurdish partners who led the fight against ISIS and risked being exposed to assault by Turkey and the Syrian regime. A more responsible course would have been to use the prospect of an eventual American withdrawal to help avert a subsequent conflict between the Kurds and their adversaries.

If, as he is now suggesting, Mr Trump withdraws the troops more gradually rather than right away, that opportunity might still exist. It requires him to use that time wisely.

He should start by abandoning the dangerous notion of Turkey seizing areas controlled by Kurdish forces and instead allow the Kurds – in the absence of any long-term American protection – to negotiate an understanding with the Syrian regime.

This might entail returning some aspects of the Syrian state to north-east Syria, Kurdish forces retaining their military capacity but lowering their profile and a degree of self-governance for the region.

In Afghanistan, too, Mr Trump's bottom line was correct. After more than 17 years of combat and a

Troop withdrawals can be messy and costly even in the best of circumstances. But that is not a reason to drift into forever wars while searching for the perfect exit. It is a reason to be disciplined about objectives and judicious about intervening in the first place.

virtual stalemate, at best, for more than a decade, there is little rationale for continuing to expend American blood and treasure on a conflict trending badly, with unclear objectives.

But here, too, the self-proclaimed "great negotiator" erred in folding America's limited cards for nothing in return, rather than using his willingness to withdraw as an incentive for the Taliban – currently locked in negotiations with Mr Trump's own diplomats – to make peace.

So much is objectionable about the Trump era that it is hard for critics to know which targets to strike. But principled opposition requires that progressive opponents of Mr Trump not distort their beliefs for quick rhetorical wins. Whatever administration eventually follows will have many messes to clean up and will need to distinguish those that truly matter.

Inevitably, the US will face threats that will require the use of military force. But we ought to continually question our enduring involvement in faraway conflicts, particularly when they come at a terrible cost to America and local populations as in Afghanistan and Iraq; make the US complicit in abuses as in Yemen; entangle it with unsavoury partners as occurred with some elements of the Syrian opposition; or exacerbate anti-American sentiment as its broader counter-terrorism campaign often did.

Troop withdrawals can be messy and costly even in the best of circumstances. But that is not a reason to drift into forever wars while searching for the perfect exit.

It is a reason to be disciplined about objectives and judicious about intervening in the first place. Mr Trump's Syria and Afghanistan decisions, assuming he sticks to them, may well lead to disastrous outcomes because of how they were executed, their timing, the complete lack of consultation with allies and experts and his utter failure to leverage them. All of that justifies a verdict of malpractice.

But one can render that judgment while acknowledging that done differently, withdrawing is the right thing to do. NYTIMES

• Jon Finer, an adjunct senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, was the chief of staff and director of policy planning at the State Department under Mr John Kerry. Robert Malley, the president and chief executive officer of the International Crisis Group, served in the Obama administration as special assistant to the president.

You know what would spark joy? Buying less rubbish

Alexandra Spring

there's no attention to (the fact that) maybe you should have thought about the end life of that shirt when you bought it."

We're chucking out more than greying T-shirts and old tax receipts. While that cotton T-shirt only cost you 10 dollars, there were countless resources that went into it: the materials, the water, the energy, the labour, the transport and the packaging – they're all being wasted too.

And we really can't afford to say "yeah-nah". According to the World Bank, we are producing more than 2 billion tonnes of garbage each year, with that figure set to jump to 3.4 billion tonnes in the next 30 years. Landfills around the world are overflowing, with Australians throwing out 6,000kg of clothing into landfill every 10 minutes.

Recycling is not a cure-all. Last year China sparked a global recycling crisis when it closed its doors to imports of contaminated recycled material.

Around the world, local councils stockpiled recycling or sent it straight to landfill.

Dumping unwanted stuff at charity shops is also not the answer.

Only a tiny percentage of clothing donated, for instance, goes on sale. The unusable junk is sent to landfill,

much of the rest is exported to impoverished countries, where it is on-sold relatively cheaply to the population. That sounds good in theory but, in reality, it can have a devastating impact on local markets, given the variable quality of secondhand clothes.

It can also limit the development of local industries, and can speed up the demise of traditional clothes.

Why make something original when there are cheap jeans and designer knock-off tops available?

There is another Japanese tradition that Ms Kondo – and the rest of us – could embrace. It's called *mottainai*.

It has a long history but essentially it expresses regret at the idea of waste and reflects an awareness of interdependence and impermanence of things.

Mottainai is all about reusing, repurposing, repairing and respecting items. How powerful it would have been to see Ms Kondo chopping up old T-shirts for cleaning cloths to replace sponges or paper towels. Or perhaps she could have encouraged her desperate hoarders to repair their old shoes, bicycles and kitchen appliances, instead of turfing them out?

There are plenty of alternatives to the rubbish dump for those who really can't stand to reuse or repurpose things that aren't zinging with joy.

In Australia, apart from selling it on eBay or Gumtree, there are local swap groups on Facebook or charity groups looking to pickup unwanted furniture and clothes for those in need. It may not deliver that instant clean apartment feeling, but the goods will end up going to a better home.

Most of all, I wish Marie Kondo would just say stop! Stop buying all this stuff.

The only solution to the world's waste crisis is to halt the consumerism clogging our landfills, polluting our oceans and overcrowding our homes. Because what would really spark joy would be a world that isn't overflowing with garbage. THE GUARDIAN



US President Donald Trump's desire to withdraw troops from Syria and Afghanistan deserves to be encouraged, not denigrated. While Mr Trump's error was how the plans were executed, the timing and the complete lack of consultation with allies, withdrawing is the right thing to do, the writers say. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Is it time to give up on the World Bank?

Mihir Sharma

For the head of the World Bank Group to quit unexpectedly would have been big news under any circumstances. But the reason outgoing president Jim Yong Kim gave for his resignation on Monday is even more revealing.

Mr Kim said he was leaving the world's most influential development and infrastructure-building agency to join a private-sector infrastructure investment fund because he believed "this is the path through which I will be able to make the

largest impact on major global issues like climate change and the infrastructure deficit in emerging markets".

One can hardly imagine a more potent indictment of the World Bank's role in the developing world than having its head vote with his feet. The truth is that Mr Kim isn't wrong. The World Bank has simply not been effective enough at what is supposed to be its core task: mobilising funds for infrastructure investment in poorer countries.

The financial gap that emerging markets have to bridge is huge; between US\$1 trillion and US\$1.5 trillion (S\$1.35 trillion and S\$2 trillion) annually is needed for

investment in infrastructure. And how much can multilateral development banks (MDBs) raise in total? All of them put together – not just the World Bank but also regional MDBs like the Asian Development Bank – can spend about US\$16 billion a year, said Dr Nancy Lee, a senior policy fellow at the Centre for Global Development.

Worse, only about US\$45 billion of that goes into infrastructure investment. One response to this problem could be to capitalise these banks better.

But as we're likely to discover in the battle – between the Trump administration and the rest of the world – that is now inevitable after Mr Kim's resignation, the US isn't terribly interested in multilateral institutions like the World Bank. (This is a striking contrast to China, which is looking to scale up the institutions it dominates, such as the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank.)

So more money for the World

Bank is out – and even if it was committed, it wouldn't come close to addressing the "infrastructure deficit" that Mr Kim talks about. So where will the rest of the money have to come from?

Well, from our pockets, that's where. It is savers across the world whose money will need to be aggregated and sent overseas to where it can best be put to work – in the developing world. In other words, private finance will have to step in and put just a fraction of the US\$90 plus trillion of rich-country savings into emerging-market infrastructure.

This is where the World Bank has fallen short. Back when it was set up, in the 1940s, the bank was supposed to work closely with the private sector, not to make grants or loans to its own money. It was meant, in fact, to be an underwriter of sorts.

Mr Henry Morgenthau, the US Treasury secretary back when the Bretton Woods institutions were being designed, was pretty clear

about what the bank's role: "The primary aim of such an agency should be to encourage private capital to go abroad for productive investment by sharing the risks of private investors in large ventures..."

The most important of the bank's operations will be to guarantee loans in order that investors may have a reasonable assurance of safety in placing their funds abroad.

But, as pointed out by Dr Chris Humphrey and Dr Annalisa Prizzon of the Overseas Development Institute, that isn't how things panned out. In fact, in 2013, less than 2 per cent of the total funds mobilised by all development finance institutions took the form of loan guarantees.

Instead of working with the private sector, the World Bank has become a slack, bloated, public-sector bureaucracy that survives by flattering its host governments and playing it safe with donors. Most of its lending is direct to governments. That is great

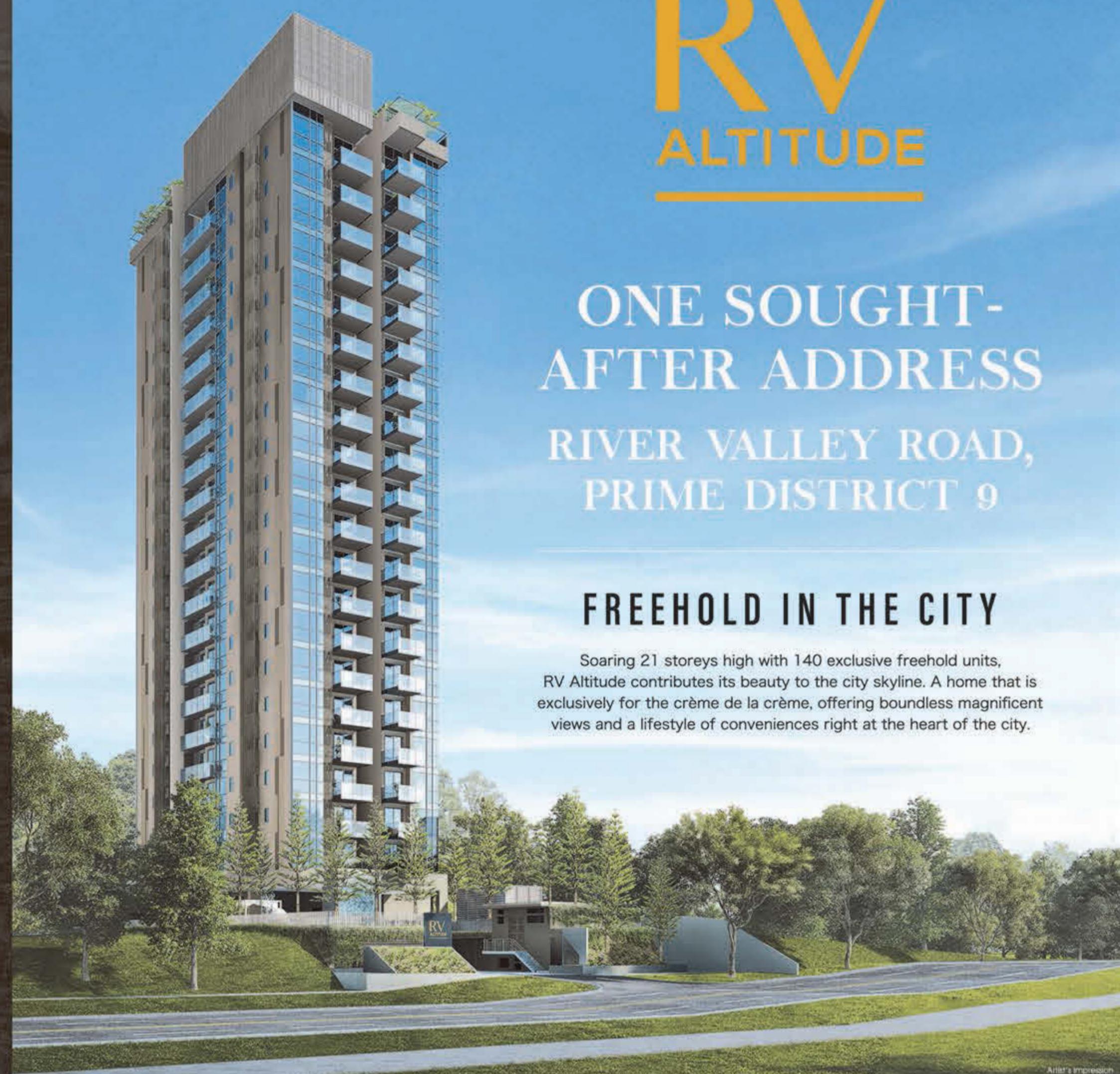
for all concerned: The bank's staff just have to monitor the lending process; most need minimal specialist skills.

Donor governments can manoeuvre to use the bank as a tool of their foreign policy. And recipient governments control where the cash goes – frequently into their own state-controlled companies or institutions.

Nobody needs to work very hard as long as everyone gets along, which is why the bank goes out of its way not to confront, for example, major "customers" such as the Indian government.

There have been recent efforts to change this lazy equilibrium. Since early in Mr Kim's term, the World Bank and other multilateral development agencies have tried to de-prioritise concessional loans as an instrument and raise the profile of guarantees. His premature departure, though, tells us all we need to know about how successful that effort has been. BLOOMBERG

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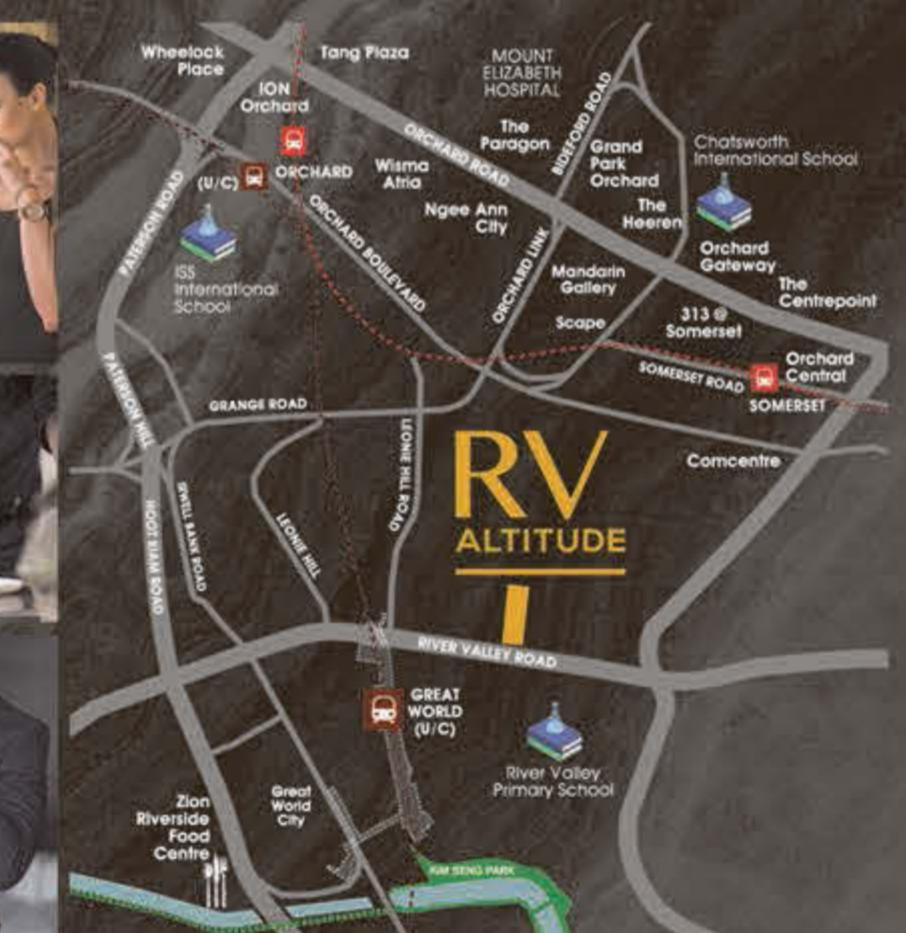
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A port in Qingdao, China. The Trump administration sees, very correctly, that the basis of international power is today, primarily, economic, says Lynn Ockersz of Sri Lanka's *The Island* newspaper. The primacy of economic power renders "hot" wars superfluous although the US would need to constantly look over its shoulders at states such as China, Russia and Iran which would resist falling easily in line with it. PHOTO: AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

TheViewFromAsia

Fears over US foreign policy shifts

Asia News Network writers share their concerns over the changing nature of US foreign policy. Here are excerpts

US' 'no' to global policeman role

Lynn Ockersz
The Island, Sri Lanka

The decision by US President Donald Trump to withdraw his country's troops from Syria with the declaration that the US would be no more the global "policeman", marks a notable shift in US foreign policy.

If the US President is to be taken at his word, the US would drastically reduce its active military presence the world over, beginning with Syria, to be apparently followed by Afghanistan. Paying a lightning visit to US troops in Iraq at Christmas time, Mr Trump was quoted as saying, by way of justification for his withdrawal decision: "It's not fair when the burden is all on us. We don't want to be taken advantage of any more by countries that use us and use our incredible military to protect them. They don't pay for it and they're going to have to."

Is the US heading for a policy of international isolation?

The minds of the more seasoned observers of international affairs ought to go back to the inter-war years when the US opted for a policy of international isolation. It persisted in this stance until the compulsions of World War II, such as the non-aggression pact between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union at the height of the war, coupled with Japan's alliance with Germany, compelled the US to enter the war on the side of the Western alliance.

The decision by the US to enter the war proved crucial in that it enabled the West to triumph over Germany. Needless to say, this result led to the emergence of the US as a superpower along with the eventual domination of world affairs by the West.

However, we now live in substantially different, post-Cold War times when multi-polarity and not bipolarity is the chief characteristic of the world power system. The US has to now contend with a multiplicity of powers that are in competition with it and among themselves for global economic and strategic influence. Chief among the latter is China.

Tense although the present times may be, there is no danger of wars on the scale of the two World Wars breaking out. The Trump administration has made it plain that it is not burdened with any "ideological baggage" from the past. Instead, the US has made it clear that it intends "to go it alone", seeking to protect, in the main,

what it sees as its national interests. Hence the slogan "America First".

Accordingly, the US could seriously consider disengaging from the world, if its interests are well served by such a policy stance. It could well afford to do this currently because it remains the world's No. 1 military, economic and political power.

The confidence deriving from the consciousness of its prime power status is such that the US could even afford to be dismissive of China's undoubted power. The current US-China trade war is proof of this.

But there is some "method" in this seeming "madness". This is because the Trump administration sees, very correctly, that the basis of international power is today, primarily, economic and not military in nature.

The primacy of economic power renders "hot" wars superfluous although the US would need to constantly look over its shoulders at states such as China, Russia and Iran which would resist falling easily in line with it.

Besides, the US is forging close relations with India with a view to counter-balancing China's influence and power in the South and South-east Asian regions.

Accordingly, the US could afford to play a hands-off role in the world's trouble spots. However, civilians are dying in mind-numbing numbers in the war zones of the South, including Syria, the Middle East and Afghanistan. What could be done to alleviate human suffering in these regions of war is the moot issue. The Trump administration ought to be reminded by the more humanistic

If Mr Trump cannot realise his campaign pledges related to his domestic political agenda... he will try to find a way out in foreign policy. How will he resolve trade frictions with China? Can he make North Korea take concrete steps towards denuclearisation? Won't the withdrawal of US troops from Syria and the reduction of those in Afghanistan lead to the emergence of radical groups? It is problematic that no firm strategy or solutions can be seen in any of these cases.

sections of the US that it could not continue to turn a blind eye to these hapless humans. Its standing as a civilising influence could very well be at stake.

Trump puzzle for Delhi mandarins

Ishan Joshi
The Statesman, India

It's not easy being a foreign office mandarin or geostrategic affairs policy wonk in New Delhi nowadays.

For, looking at the emerging Indo-US relationship from the Indian perspective, this breed is as cagey as those in power whom they advise on what precisely the Donald Trump administration is up to. And the statements of intent and policy pronouncements by Washington over the first week of 2019 have only ratcheted up the uncertainty.

First, President Trump iterated that the US will no longer be the world's policeman and cop abase for it in the bargain. Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria... a substantial US withdrawal from these engagements is now a fait accompli.

There is a simultaneous initiative by Washington to engage more deeply with the Asia-Pacific region by headlining India's role while seeking to rein in China.

Late on Dec 31, President Trump signed an Act designed to counter the encroaching influence and growing threat allegedly emanating from Beijing which seemed to underline an Indo-US leadership for the region.

The Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, or Aria, allocates a five-year budget of US\$1.5 billion (S\$2 billion) to enhance cooperation with the US' strategic regional allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Calling for strengthening of diplomatic, economic and security ties with India, the new legislation cites "China's illegal construction and militarisation of artificial features in the South China Sea and coercive economic practices", and authorises appropriate action to "counter China's influence to undermine the international system".

Emphasising the "designation of India as a major defence partner, which is unique to India", the new law also refers to the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue between the US, Australia, India and Japan, calling it "vital to address pressing security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region in order to promote a rules-based order; respect for international law; and a free and open Indo-Pacific".

The Act, in the light of the details above, ought to have sent the Indian strategic establishment into raptures as it attempts to build an

effective security-economic architecture within which to fully unleash the country's potential as a regional powerhouse. Additionally, struggling as New Delhi is with working out a viable stand vis-a-vis its more powerful northern neighbour, especially given its concerns over China's One Belt One Road initiative which India believes has the potential to chip away at its sovereignty, Trump signing the Aria would have in any other context been excellent leverage.

Yet, the mood in New Delhi is far from sanguine. Indian foreign policy over the past decade has essentially been a tightrope walk, balancing its way between the changing priorities of the only superpower in the world, staying engaged with a Russia that harbours ambitions of restoring itself to its former glory and dealing with the exponential growth in economic and military heft of the dominant regional power which is China; all of it premised on its own safety concerns and economic interests.

Now, the advent of Mr Trump signing the Aria means that its diplomats' safety-first approach could well be subject to the law of diminishing returns. But to take a call on which way to go in too decisive a manner is fraught with dangers in foreign policy terms.

Before doing so, therefore, a deeper understanding of the motivations and seriousness of Washington's definition of a rules-based Asia-Pacific order is vital. Donald J. Trump's presidency, unfortunately, is hindering rather than aiding that process in global capitals, including New Delhi.

Anxiety over White House decisions

Editorial
The Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan

US President Donald Trump is approaching the halfway point in his first four-year term in office. Due to his excessively arbitrary leadership and antagonism with Congress, there is concern that his management of the government will be paralysed.

Many Cabinet secretaries and other high-ranking US government officials have been replaced or forced to resign due to confrontations with Mr Trump. The turnover rate of his administration officials is higher than that of previous administrations. Anxiety cannot be dispelled about whether mistaken policies will be carried out because expert checking does not work.

If Mr Trump cannot realise his campaign pledges related to his domestic political agenda, including the construction of a wall on the border, he will try to find a way out in foreign policy. How will he resolve trade frictions with China? Can he make North Korea take concrete steps towards denuclearisation?

Won't the withdrawal of US troops from Syria and the reduction of those in Afghanistan lead to the emergence of radical groups? It is problematic that no firm strategy or solutions can be seen in any of these cases.

• *The View From Asia* is a compilation of articles from The Straits Times' media partner Asia News Network, a grouping of 23 news organisations.

Trump vs. Ocasio-Cortez: Who will win online war?

Kara Swisher

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is "Extremely Online".

That's the phrase that technology writer Charlie Warzel used to describe the new congresswoman in an article on Buzzfeed News, in which he noted a multitude of fast-twitch posts by her on a range of issues on Instagram and Twitter over a short period last week. The Democrat is "the perfect foil for the pro-Trump media", he wrote. Her posts "are relentless, keeping Ocasio-Cortez in the news cycle. She's an insurgent, Internet-native political force".

"Extremely Online" – typically capitalised – is usually defined as conducting as much of one's life online and having as little human contact as possible. But Ms Ocasio-Cortez embodies and morphs the concept like the digital native she is, meaning simply that she speaks the language of the Internet fluently. That was made clear by her ability to turn a video of her dancing in a "Breakfast Club" homage at Boston College – posted to hurt her – into a transcendent meta-meme last week.

It was accomplished by her offering an expertly rendered bookend, a decade later, as she danced to "War (What Is It Good For)" right by the plaque with her name on it outside her Capitol Hill office.

And more: Ms Ocasio-Cortez has done live conversations that include both cooking tips and policy pronouncements, has posted stories of her congressional experience the way others post vacation or holiday or food photos and has clapped back expertly in pithy tweets at whatever gets dished out at her by the right. What she is doing is significant for politics, because of one key thing: She has made digital depictions of herself seem very analogue. In other words, she is perfectly human online.

The ability to take your message and yourself directly to people is perhaps one of this era's most important talents. In this, as much as she'd hate to admit it, Ms Ocasio-Cortez is following in the footsteps of President Donald Trump.

I recently wrote a column about how Mr Trump had been using social media to govern, noting that "we are now a government of the Twitter, by the Twitter and for the Twitter".

That's even truer this week, as the government shutdown has dragged on and Mr Trump has taken to Twitter to provide running commentary of the situation and also to make threats, attack foes, lob fact-free water balloons and generally conduct a bizarre play-by-play of his state of mind.

After his television appearance this week to demand funding for his fantasy wall was widely panned as lacklustre, he doubled down on tweets to make his ALL-CAPS points.

What's interesting about Mr Trump's digital efforts is that even though he is always online, he is not Extremely Online. Rather than fully engaging with the platforms and employing their nifty audio and video tools, he has stuck to text, using his own set of locutions and his own distinctive voice.

While at first this made him seem, to many supporters at least, more authentic than the average politician, it is now making him look more and more like a giant cartoon bobblehead. The Internet is not making him more of a person.

And while he spouts outward, turning into an online megaphone, Ms Ocasio-Cortez listens, takes everything in and reacts. Both methods work.

And she is the only one who can keep up with him online.

The joint response by Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senator Chuck Schumer to Mr Trump's wall speech turned into a very funny mom-and-dad-sure-are-mad meme, while Senator Lindsey Graham looked like a feckless spinning top as he pinged from faux indignation at some of Mr Trump's acts to adulation.

There is no one close, except Representative Beto O'Rourke, whose adorable stylings tend more towards family igloo-building and earnest informational postings and live Facebook posts (he just did one from the border, carrying a doughnut, after Mr Trump's speech). But he's slow and cool and deep dude in a way that – while effective – is very different from the more frantic tone that both Mr Trump and Ms Ocasio-Cortez employ.

It would be a mistake to dismiss their practices as just noise. Because, as Mr Warzel noted correctly, they are controlling the narrative by doing this so effectively. "It's agenda-setting," he wrote, whether we're talking about the wall (Mr Trump) or taxing the rich (Ms Ocasio-Cortez). "Constant content creation forces your opponent to respond to you." It means you are creating the news.

While there is a danger in that, it's probably the way it's going to be from here on out, and those who can do it well are more likely to get the attention in this very dissonant world. This is the world that was predicted in the 1976 satirical movie *Network*, now a popular Broadway show.

I saw it recently and the lead character, Howard Beale, articulated exactly what is happening now, for good or not so good: "I feel vivid and flashing, as if suddenly I'd been plugged into some great electromagnetic field," he says. "It is a shattering and beautiful sensation. It is the exalted flow of the space-time continuum, save that it is spaceless and timeless and of such loveliness. I feel on the verge of some great, ultimate truth. And you will not take me off the air for now or for any other spaceless time!"

Beale was Extremely Online. NYTIMES.

• Kara Swisher is editor at large for the technology news website Recode.



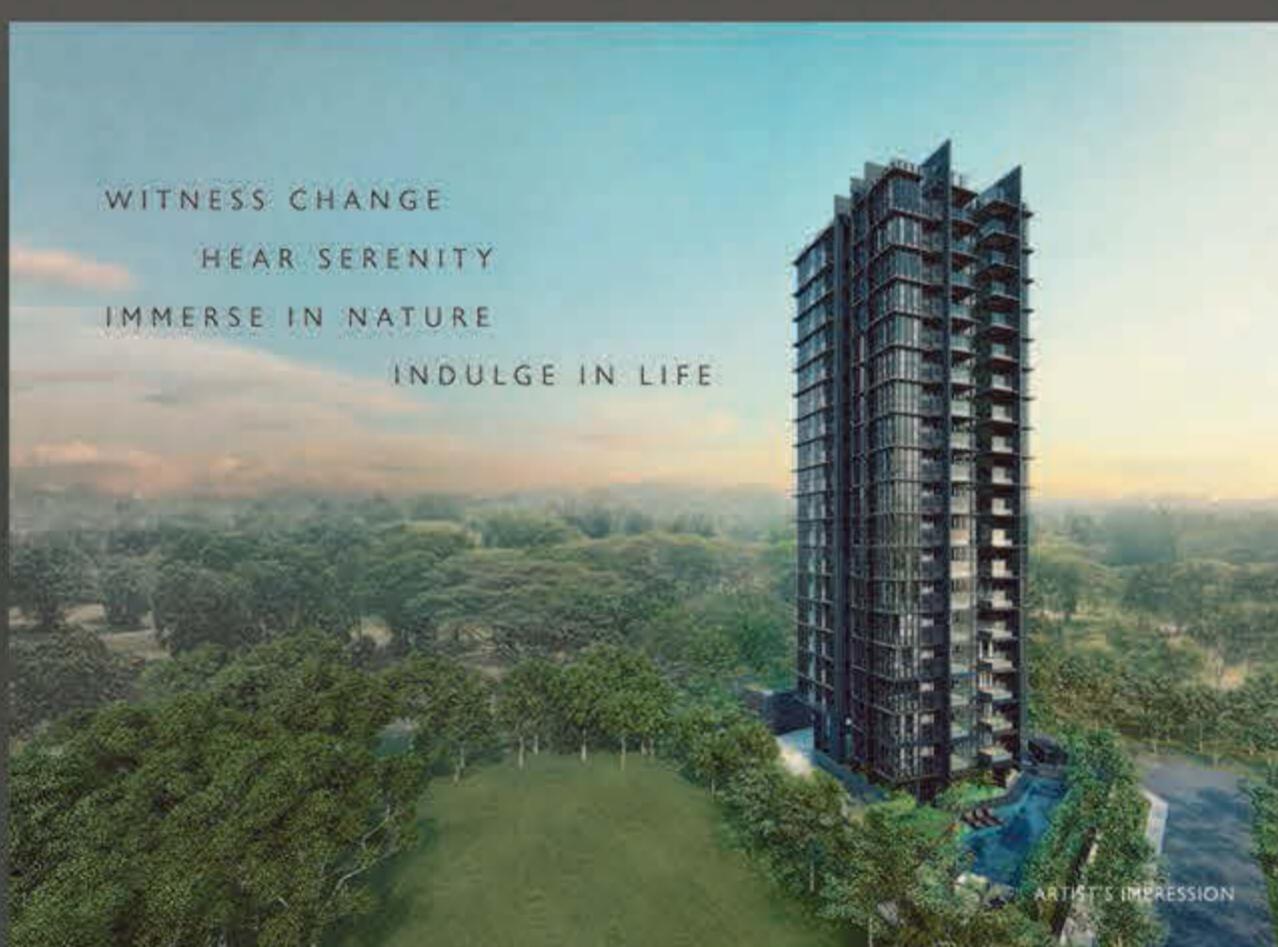
Ms Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez has been described as "an insurgent, Internet-native political force".

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ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

A work of art that sticks out

Resembling a giant bonfire, this art installation on the lawn outside the Asian Civilisations Museum is lit up at night with colourful LED lights.

Children can climb up the lower portion, and visitors can sit on chairs surrounding the installation

to watch the lights change colour. Singapore designer Sebastian Chun, who created the artwork, which is titled Sticks, drew inspiration from the popular childhood game, pick-up sticks.

The installation is among the

highlights of the Light To Night Festival, which returns for its third year next week. The festival will run in two parts – as part of Singapore Art Week from Jan 18 to 27, and as part of the Singapore Bicentennial from Jan 28 to Feb 24.

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- 80% of Liver Cancer happens in Asia – Nikkei Asian Review – WHY?
- "My dad is limping in pain & my mom is scratching all over her body, I am clueless"
- "My child is having heart palpitations - besides seeing the doctor, what else can I do to help?"
- "Growing problem of kids with High Blood Pressure" - SPH - The Straits Times
- Heart Health - Estrogen Dominance - Cholesterol Lies - Synthetic Supplements
- "Women living more years in ill health" - SPH - The Straits Times; higher death rates in lung cancer, heart attacks, stroke, type 1 diabetes, alzheimer's disease & thyroid issues
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Manufacturing still key for S'pore: Chan

Minister upbeat on prospects, citing quality assurance and resilient supply chain

Ng Jun Sen
Business Correspondent

Manufacturing will remain a key part of Singapore's economy although it will encounter greater disruption in the years ahead, said Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing yesterday.

Mr Chan noted that the evolving nature of the industry will alter the composition of manufacturing to one of low-volume but high-quality products that require greater skills to produce.

Manufacturing makes up a fifth of Singapore's economy but there have been predictions that this will be a gloomy year for the sector.

The numbers tell a mixed story: The sector saw growth of 5.5 per cent in the last quarter of 2018 compared with the same period in 2017 but output declined 8.7 per cent compared with the third quarter, according to recent flash estimates.

Mr Chan, who was speaking at the opening of a new plastic moulding centre in Tuas built by American medical equipment manufacturer Becton Dickinson, had a more positive outlook.

He noted that manufacturing can continue to expand if the industry is closely tied to research and development, a process that would also enrich the country overall.

But Singapore also has to get its intellectual property protection



Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing at the official opening of Becton Dickinson's Tuas plastic moulding centre yesterday. The centre is part of the US medical equipment maker's \$7 million transformation plan. ST PHOTO: MARK CHEONG

regime right, giving investors the confidence that they will be safeguarded here, Mr Chan added.

The way Singapore conducts quality assurance should also change fundamentally as the manufacturing sector competes with others on the basis of quality standards, not price or scale, he said.

Mr Chan, who also visited local

vertical farm Greenphyto in the morning, said Singapore's resilient supply chain is another advantage.

"We will deliver the ability for Singapore to connect to the world and we will never be constrained by our size or geography," he said.

"If we can get these few ingredients right, I have every confidence that manufacturing and advanced

manufacturing will continue to grow from strength to strength in Singapore."

But the pursuit of better products, company performance or economic growth is not an end in itself – workers must benefit from picking up new skills and taking on higher productivity tasks by drawing better pay cheques, he said.

Becton Dickinson plant management director Hashim Baba agreed, citing his company's culture of specialised training and worker development as reasons why he stayed with the firm since it set up its Singapore headquarters three decades ago. The company also sponsored his Master of Business Administration course.

"It is difficult to find Singaporeans willing to put on a uniform and work in manufacturing in Tuas," said Mr Hashim, who started as a technical specialist with a polytechnic diploma in mechanical engineering and now manages a plant of 950 staff.

"To retain talent in manufacturing, there must be an engaging company culture and a system that trains its staff in all sorts of skills."

The firm, which produces medical technology equipment, opened its advanced moulding centre yesterday as part of its US\$5.2 million (\$7 million) industry transformation plan. This involves expanding its plastic-moulded component production through smart technology such as artificial intelligence, data analytics and robotics.

The new centre will boost Becton Dickinson's competency, cutting reliance on manual labour by at least 50 per cent, said executive vice-president and president of greater Asia James Lim. Around 120 of its 1,500 employees have undergone training programmes and up to 500 workers will be re-skilled and re-deployed to technologically advanced roles by 2023.

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RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

If we can get these few ingredients right, I have every confidence that manufacturing and advanced manufacturing will continue to grow from strength to strength in Singapore.

“

TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER CHAN CHUN SING, who said the sector can thrive if Singapore makes necessary adjustments to its intellectual property protection regime and the way it conducts quality assurance.

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Singapore FinTech Association president Chia Hock Lai (centre left) and Banking and Financial Services Union president Sim Cheng Huat after signing a memorandum of understanding between the two organisations yesterday. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSO CHERN



Banking union now open to all in finance

Union renamed to reflect change; fintech body joins NTUC scheme

Seow Bei Yi

A union representing administrative and managerial staff of banks here has now opened its doors to all other workers in the financial services industry, including higher-level professionals, managers, and executives (PMEs).

Previously called the Singapore Bank Officers' Association, the group renamed itself the Banking and Financial Services Union (BFSU) on Wednesday, and now represents workers such as relationship managers and asset managers.

Separately, the Singapore FinTech Association (SFA) announced yesterday its new affiliation to the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), meaning workers who join as members will receive the same benefits as NTUC members and have an added outlet to channel ground feedback to policymakers.

The SFA previously only had corporate members, including fintech companies and banks, numbering around 320. It is the first partner of NTUC's U Associate initiative, which pools together guilds and communities to support professionals, to form such an affiliation.

These latest moves come more than a year after NTUC updated its constitution to serve all workers, including managers and freelancers.

Announcing the changes yesterday at NTUC Centre, NTUC secretary-general Ng Chee Meng said: "Technological and digital breakthroughs are really changing consumer behaviour... (as well as professions), including the banking and financing industry."

He added: "This disruption by technologies will not cease anytime soon... Blockchain, artificial intelligence will hit our shores and provide opportunities, even as they create new challenges."

Companies and workers must stay relevant or risk falling behind, he said, noting that transformation is tough as it requires employers to understand where op-

portunities lie, the Government to be generous in providing funding to change industries, and for unions and workers to be on board with changes.

The BFSU, which aims to help professionals stay relevant and competitive amid technological advancement and changes in the industry, wants to double its current membership of 6,200 in the next four years.

The Banking and Financial Services Union, which aims to help professionals stay relevant and competitive amid technological advancement and changes in the industry, wants to double its current membership of 6,200 in the next four years.

Ministry of Manpower statistics show there are 155,000 workers in the financial services industry.

The BFSU also plans to organise more roadshows and networking sessions this year to reach out to professionals. The goal is to improve wages, welfare and job prospects of those it represents.

Mr Wee Soon Guan, general secretary of the BFSU, called its change "the first step in the right direction" to make the union more representative of workers in the growing banking and financial sector.

NTUC assistant secretary-general Patrick Tay said: "Majority of the new entrants to this financial sector in the last three to five years are PMEs (professionals, managers and executives), so it's imperative that we rename and serve the needs of this group." He added that many may not be aware that the union can represent them.

Yesterday, the BFSU signed a memorandum of understanding with the SFA, recognising it as a partner of the union's Finance Industry Professionals Chapter.

SFA president Chia Hock Lai said: "As one of the top financial centres and leading fintech hubs, we see a growing workforce... performing fintech roles."

"Being part of the professionals chapter... we can help to re-skill some of our members," he said. "By working closely with NTUC, we can also channel ground feedback to the labour MPs, who look after the welfare and benefits of workers – acting as a voice for those working in fintech companies."

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More services in new 99%SME portal

Aw Cheng Wei

Consumers can now search for nearby stores selling the products they want and choose from more delivery options on the revamped e-commerce platform 99%SME.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) listed on the portal can also target their online marketing efforts at consumers in the vicinity and drive footfall to their brick-and-mortar retail stores.

The revamped 99%SME portal, launched yesterday, is part of an eponymous campaign – co-founded by Singtel and DBS in 2015 – that helps SMEs adopt digital technology to grow their businesses.

It also supports efforts by the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) to boost the digital capabilities of the retail sector.

"The new 99%SME platform presents SMEs with all the features of a digital marketplace to optimise their market exposure and help shoppers find and buy their products either online or in-store," said Mr Andrew Lim, Singtel's business group managing director.

It also gives SMEs a chance to "develop an online revenue stream, and... encourage more buyers to visit their physical stores", he added.

Besides the location-based product search, consumers will have more last-mile delivery options, including delivery to their homes or pickup points in the community,



Ms Sim Ann (first row, fourth from left), Senior Minister of State for Communications and Information, and Culture, Community and Youth, giving the thumbs up to the launch of the revamped e-commerce portal 99%SME, at Thye Hin Hoe Medical Store in Bedok yesterday. PHOTO: SINGTEL

and self-pickup from the stores. SMEs can access business insights to better understand their sales performance and plan their product mix to optimise sales, said a joint media release by Singtel, DBS and IMDA.

They can "freely use the platform's library of common copyright-free product images and details to list their products and services more easily," said the state-

ment.

In addition, they have access to DBS' business-to-business online marketplace where they can sell their products and services to large companies.

They can tap supply chain connections as well as financing and payment solutions that are usually only open to large enterprises.

SMEs do not have to pay to list their products or services on 99%SME.

More than 8,000 retailers have

joined the site to date.

Ms Jane Lim, assistant chief executive of IMDA's sector transformation group, said neighbourhood retailers with physical stores should capitalise on the strong growth of e-commerce here.

"Dedicated platforms... can help them digitalise and compete more effectively in an increasingly connected and globalised market," she said.

Mr Bobby Ng, general manager

of Thye Hin Hoe Medical Store in Bedok Central, said that 99%SME linked him up with Nanyang Polytechnic, which set up his store's website for free.

Launched in June last year, the site has driven up his store's sales by about 10 per cent.

Mr Ng said: "Without 99%SME, I would not have been able to (achieve that)."

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Nissan widens boardroom powers in wake of Ghosn scandal

PARIS • Nissan Motor took steps to tighten its corporate governance, giving more powers to the board, after the arrest of former chairman Carlos Ghosn for alleged financial improprieties.

The board decided to widen the scope of decisions that require its approval and will determine on an interim basis the compensation packages awarded to directors and executives, according to a statement on Thursday.

Chief executive officer Hiroto Saikawa has pledged to address corporate-governance shortcomings that have ensnared the company in the scandal involving Ghosn, who was accused of misdeeds, including under-reporting his income. Last month, Mr Saikawa blamed the company's governance for allowing "the situation to continue", while outside observers have cited a lack of internal controls. Its rules gave unusual powers to its former chairman.

The carmaker said the decision on who decides compensation would remain in effect until a committee on improving governance hands down its proposals. Nissan also updated its corporate governance code last month to clarify its policy on cross-shareholdings, which has direct bearing on its partnership with French carmaker Renault.

The board "re-emphasised its commitment to its alliance partnership with Renault and Mitsubishi Motors", according to the statement.

Ghosn held pivotal roles in Japan and France as chairman of Nissan and chief of Renault, as well as head of the alliance that binds together both carmakers.

Nissan, where allegations of wrongdoing surfaced, removed him from his post after his arrest on Nov 19, while Renault nominally kept him in place as it awaits more evidence of misconduct.

Ghosn has disputed the allegations, though prosecutors in Japan have doubled down, re-arresting the executive last month and bringing new accusations that range from hiding investment losses to misuse of company funds.

In a court appearance on Tuesday, Ghosn said that he had been wrongly accused and unfairly detained, calling the allegations "meritless and unsubstantiated". The following day, he lost an appeal against his continuing detention, diminishing prospects of an early release on bail.

Yesterday, Tokyo prosecutors filed two new charges of financial misconduct against Ghosn, so the car tycoon is unlikely to be leaving his jail cell soon.

His arrest came after a months-long investigation by Nissan into his conduct, a probe that was kept from its French partner. If proven, each of Ghosn's alleged offences may carry a sentence of as much as 10 years, prosecutors have said.

Renault is the largest shareholder in Nissan and the Asian company in return is the second-largest shareholder in the French carmaker. The two companies also have minority shareholdings in Germany's Daimler AG. Nissan said it also has minority cross-shareholdings with other companies. BLOOMBERG

How to burn \$6m in 10 days in HK's housing market

HONG KONG • A mystery buyer has forfeited a HK\$36 million (\$S6.2 million) deposit after walking away from plans to buy a home in Hong Kong's most prestigious neighbourhood.

The unidentified buyer walked away from the transaction for the three-bedroom house in Mount Nicholson on the Peak just 10 days after agreeing to buy it for HK\$722 million on Dec 31, according to a government document.

A house in the same development last year sold for almost HK\$1.4 billion, making it Asia's most expensive property on a per-sq-ft basis.

Since then, an almost 15-year bull run that made Hong Kong infamous for having the world's least affordable property market has pattered out. Fallout from the US-China trade war, rising borrowing costs and a volatile stock market have weighed on home prices, which are down about 8 per cent from their August peak.

The slump may worsen, with Capital Economics expecting home prices to fall about 30 per cent over the next five years, including a 15 per cent slump this year, according to a note published on Thursday.

BLOOMBERG

\$124m

Cost of the Mount Nicholson house.

\$6.2m

Deposit the buyer forfeited 10 days after committing to buying the property.

SPH's move into student housing boosts revenues

Revenues from property and digital media ads rise, while print ads sees slower decline

Revenue from property – Singapore Press Holdings' largest segment and a steady one at that – rose 11.1 per cent to \$68 million.

The segment recorded a 5.2 per cent jump in pre-tax profit, thanks to the initial \$3.2 million in net operating income from its recently acquired student dormitory assets.

SPH chief executive officer Ng Yat Chung noted that the group has made progress in growing recurring income in the property segment, with the contribution from the British student housing.

Plans to grow the assets to a "sizeable platform" are on track.

SPH said it was actively reviewing an "extensive deal pipeline" with some in the advanced stage of negotiation.

"Demand for UK university education is expected to be sustained even after Brexit, as the UK is a pop-

ular destination for quality education for international students," said the company in a statement on its first-quarter earnings yesterday.

It acquired the portfolio of 14 purpose-built student accommodation buildings across six towns and cities in the United Kingdom for about \$321 million in September from the Unite Group. The assets in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Huddersfield, Plymouth and Sheffield have a total capacity of 3,436 beds.

SPH noted that a fall in income after the partial divestment last August of the treasury and investment portfolio hit first-quarter earnings.

The media and property group noted: "The divestment was timely as SPH locked in gains and avoided losses on the portfolio during the recent financial market turbulence."

It has said that it will allocate proceeds into more yield-generating



SPH chief executive officer Ng Yat Chung said the group has made progress in growing recurring income in the property segment, with the contribution from the British student housing.
ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

assets, chiefly in the property and digital business.

Net profit came in at \$57.9 million for the three months to Nov 30, down 6.3 per cent.

Operating revenue dipped 1.7 per cent to \$254.3 million on the back of lower print advertising turnover.

This was offset by contributions

from the UK student accommodation portfolio.

The absence of retrenchment costs compared with the previous year led to operating costs dipping 7 per cent to \$183.9 million. Accordingly, operating profit rose 7.6 per cent to \$74.8 million.

Earnings per share stood at four

cents, unchanged from a year earlier. Net asset value per share was \$2.20, up from \$2.13 as at Aug 31.

No dividend was recommended for the period, the same as last year.

Revenue for SPH's media business slipped 6.8 per cent to \$162.1 million, while operating profit improved nearly 15 per cent, mainly due to the absence of retrenchment costs recognised over the same quarter last year.

Print ad revenue fell 7.2 per cent – the slowest rate of decline in four quarters: Display ads, which contribute the bulk of the revenue, fell 2.7 per cent; classified ads logged a sharp fall of 17.1 per cent; and newspaper ads slipped 7.2 per cent.

Digital ad revenue jumped 12.9 per cent, led by better performances from The Straits Times, The Business Times and Lianhe Zaobao, as well as efforts to improve offerings to advertisers.

Said Mr Ng: "The print side of the media business continues to experience headwinds even as we grew revenue from the digital side of the business."

The firm said the media business continues to pursue various digital initiatives and new partnerships as it seeks to enhance the products and improve audience engagement with better use of data analytics.

Revenue from the Others segment, including the aged care business, improved 2.6 per cent to \$24.2 million.

The counter closed unchanged at \$2.49 yesterday.

TIMELY DIVESTMENT

The divestment was timely as SPH locked in gains and avoided losses on the portfolio during the recent financial market turbulence.

“

SINGAPORE PRESS HOLDINGS, in its results announcement.



A queue for beauty vouchers at Tangs in Orchard Road on Black Friday, Nov 23 last year. Department stores registered a rise of 8.7 per cent in sales compared with the same period in 2017, though retail sales fell 3 per cent. ST FILE PHOTO

Retail sales down 3% in Nov amid slow sales of cars, tech devices

Sue-Ann Tan

Retail sales fell in November last year, after two months of year-on-year growth, according to figures released by the Singapore Department of Statistics yesterday.

Takings at the till dipped by 3 per cent compared with November 2017, dropping further than Bloomberg's 2.4 per cent forecast.

Car sales registered a big drop, declining 15.1 per cent year on year. Ex-

cluding motor vehicles, retail sales decreased at just 0.2 per cent.

Assistant Professor of Finance from the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at Singapore Management University, Aurobindo Ghosh, said: "Global uncertainty, including headwinds to trade and tariffs and slowdown in the emerging markets, might be a reason for the general decline in retail."

He added that car sales might have dropped due to a boom period in the last few months, a slight increase in

petrol prices and the availability of alternatives like Grab and other ride-hailing and car sharing services.

The sales of computer and telecommunications equipment also registered disappointing figures, falling 22.1 per cent.

This fall is partly due to high sales in November 2017, when there were major mobile phone launches.

Prof Ghosh added: "The drop in telecommunications and technology equipment is probably part of a global slowdown. For example,

there were lower sales of new iPhones, (such as)... the iPhone XS, compared with the booming sales in the previous year, which also led to a decline in Apple stock prices."

However, department stores registered an increase of 8.7 per cent in sales compared with the same period in 2017, arising partially from higher sales during the Black Friday period.

The medical goods and toiletries industry also saw a rise of 4.8 per cent, due mainly to higher sales of

cosmetics and toiletries.

Mr Joseph Incalcaterra, chief economist for Asean at HSBC Global Research, said the rise suggests an underlying growth in disposable consumption.

Sales at petrol service stations increased 3.1 per cent as a result of higher petrol prices, but recorded a small decline of 0.7 per cent in sales volume after removing the price effect.

The total retail sales value in November last year was about \$3.8

billion. Of this number, online retail sales made up an estimated 6.6 per cent.

Compared with the same period in 2017, sales of food and beverage services increased 2.4 per cent in November last year.

The total sales value of food and beverage services last November was estimated at \$845 million, compared with \$826 million in the same month in 2017.

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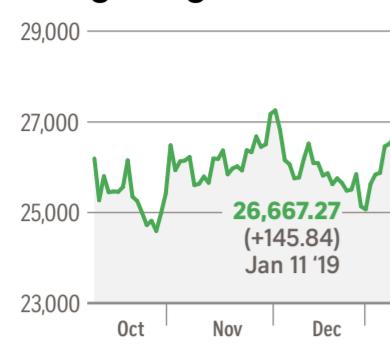
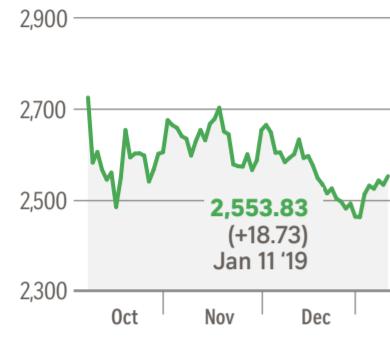
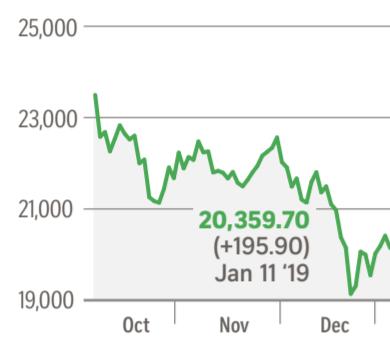
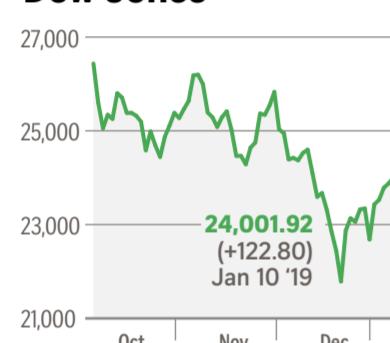
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Optimism over US-China talks lifts market mood

SGX and most other Asian bourses see modest gains after week of gloom

Navin Sregantan

A week can be a long time in share markets as local investors can attest as they look back over five days that started in gloom but ended on a slight high.

Much of the negativity that radiated through markets has mostly faded – for now. Investors can thank optimism over trade talks between China and the United States and the Federal Reserve's dovish address for the mood change.

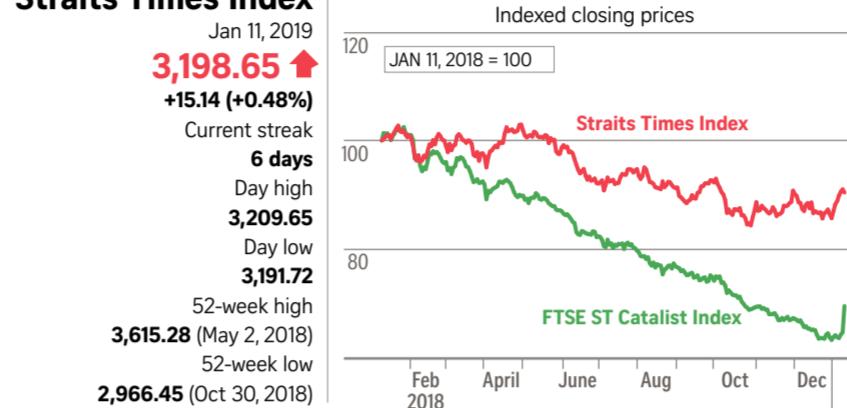
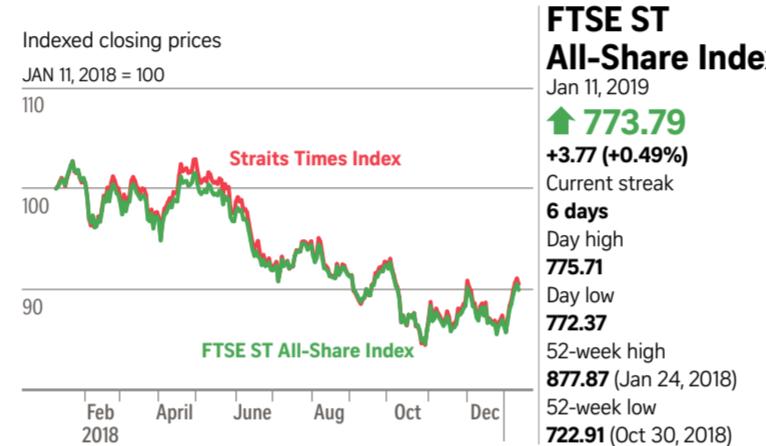
This helped the Straits Times Index (STI) end up 15.14 points, or 0.5 per cent, to 3,198.65 and ahead 4.6 per cent for the week.

Mr Toby Wu, senior analyst at eToro, said: "With 1.1 per cent of Singapore's GDP indirectly contributed by bilateral trade between the US and China, financial and industrial sectors have shown to be the top performers this week due to the US-China trade optimism."

But he also noted that "the monster rally we've been seeing in Singapore" lost some steam yesterday.

Even so, 22 of the 30 STI constituents ended the day in the black with overall turnover at 1.56 billion shares worth \$1.02 billion. Gainers beat losers 249 to 165.

The most active was GSH Corp, which fell 1.5 per cent to 32.5 cents with 104.5 million shares traded.

Straits Times Index**FTSE ST Catalist Index****FTSE ST All-Share Index****FTSE ST Small-Cap Index stocks**

52-WEEK HIGH	LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY LAST TRADED SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS %	P/BV	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS %	P/BV			
286	245	Ascendas Reit	268	+1	13710	6	13	145	129	AIMSAMP Cap Reit	137	+1	166	7.5	1
200	161	CapitaCom Trust	182	-1	9455	4.8	12	71	48	Accordia Golf Tr	55	+2	1177	7	0.6
388	293	CapitaLand	327	-1	3033	3.7	0.7	145	129	Ascendas-hTrust	80	+0.5	527	-	0.8
233	195	CapitaLand Trust	232	+1	13069	4.8	11	90.5	74	Ascendas-iTrust	105	-1	1094	5.8	12
1360	1250	CityDev	890	+20	3108	2	0.8	119	99	Asian Pay TV Tr	13.4	+0.1	3918	48.5	0.2
251	196	ComfortDelGro	216	-4	8368	4.8	18	59.5	122	Banyan Tree	59	+0.5	84	17	0.8
3128	2265	DBS Grp	2478	+34	3829	5.8	14	119	99	Best World	264	-2	1988	16	0.9
968	767	DairyFarm USD	US928	+3	170	23	-	67	48	Boustead	80	-	-	38	12
141	855	Genting Sing	104	unch	22373	3.4	16	279	115	BreadTalk	875	+0.5	120	8	2.3
39	223	Golden Agri-Res.	26	unch	8524	3.1	0.6	119	99	Bukit Sembawang	567	+2	123	32	12
42	42	HII Trust USD	US790	+15	1309	100	0.4	279	115	Cache Log Trust	73	+0.5	949	9.9	1
744	588	HongkongLand USD	US692	+7	2800	2.9	0.3	126	76	Centurion	405	unch	277	6.2	0.7
6974	5580	JMH USD	US6810	-59	404	2.4	0.7	126	75.95	China Aviation	115	+5	2700	3.9	1
4149	3155	JSJ USD	US3800	-8	149	0.8	0.4	126	75.95	China Everbright	315	-0.5	116	16	0.6
4105	2766	Jardine C&C	3681	+29	502	3.1	18	126	75.95	China Sunshine	133	unch	870	23	1.5
892	567	Kepel Corp	625	+3	2139	3.5	1	126	75.95	Chip Eng Seng	70.5	+1.5	4038	57	0.6
1404	1036	SCB Corp	1165	+4	3947	3.2	15	126	75.95	Cosco	365	+1	6730	-	15
585	455	SATS	91	-3	795	3.7	34	126	75.95	Delong	601	+5	23	-	0.6
590	572	Singtel	729	-4	1877	4.1	41	126	75.95	Duty Free Intl	21cd	+0.5	582	8.8	13
1184	914	SIA	971	+6	1148	4.1	0.8	126	75.95	EC World Reit	70	unch	1240	8.6	0.8
292	231	SPH	249	unch	3500	5.2	12	126	75.95	ESR REIT	54	+0.5	4592	7.1	0.9
370	319	ST Engineering	357	-3	1821	4.2	52	126	75.95	Frist Reit	104	unch	791	8.2	1
360	243	Sembcorp Ind	274	+5	3713	1.8	0.7	126	75.95	Frasers Com Tr.	142	92	953	6.8	0.9
365	283	Singtel	305	+1	17855	6.7	17	126	75.95	Frasers HTrust	71	-0.5	686	-	0.9
945	573	THB	689cd	+0.5	31220	0.9	33	126	75.95	Geo Energy Res	19	+0.2	1790	52	11
3037	2380	UOB	269	-9	2112	2.9	0.3	126	75.95	HRNet Group	79	-0.5	18	29	2.4
938	591	UOL	663	+18	2569	3.8	0.6	126	75.95	Health Mgt Int'l	55	unch	20	0.6	0.12
2965	1320	Venture Corp	1504	+13	3471	3.1	0.9	126	75.95	Hi-Pintl	91	+1	6687	275	14
331	297	Wilmar Int'l	324	-1	3471	3.1	0.9	126	75.95	Hong Leong Fin	260	+1	188	5	0.6
166	84	YZJ Shipbdg SGD	130	unch	17659	3.5	0.9	126	75.95	IREIT Global	73.5	-0.5	111	8.1	1

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52-WEEK HIGH	LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY LAST TRADED SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	YIELD%	P/BV	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	YIELD%	P/BV			
286	245	Ascendas Reit	268	+1	13710	6	13	145	129	AIMSAMP Cap Reit	137	+1	166	7.5	1
127	105	Ascott Reit	113	-2	1866	6.3	0.9	145	129	Accordia Golf Tr	55	+2	1177	7	0.6
77	59	Bumitama Agrl	68	+0.5	378	1.1	16	145	129	Ascendas-hTrust	80	+0.5	527	-	0.8
185	143	CDL HTrust	154	+4	3266	-	1	145	129	Ascendas-iTrust	105	-1	1094	5.8	12
200	161	CapitaCom Trust	182	+1	9455	4.8	12	145	129	Asian Pay TV Tr	13.4	+0.1			

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The Family of The Late



SEOW YIU LI RONNIE
Departed on 11 January 2019

From:
The Management & Staff of
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PRIVATE LIMITED**



HO LU LAN

Age: 70

passed away peacefully on 10 January 2019,
leaving behind loved ones.

Daughter: Catherine Fong Shuet Fern **Son-in-law:** Bernard Tan Kok Chye
Granddaughter: Bernice Tan
Brothers: Ho Fook Kin (Deceased) **Spouses:** Lu Lai Chin
Hoh Poh Shun John Ho (Deceased)
Ho Poh Lee Lim Siew Hong
Ho Kah Leng
Sisters: Ho Mei Mei **Spouse:** Ismael Figueroa
Ho Loo Yee
and All relatives.

Wake is held at Blk 38 Sin Ming Dr #01-545 S'pore 575712
Ang Yew Seng Funeral Parlour Pearl Hall.
Cortege will leave on 13 January 2019 (Sun) at 12 pm
for Mandai Crematorium Hall 2 for cremation at 1.40 pm.



HUI KENG SAE TAE

(TAE SOK KENG)

Age: 88

passed away peacefully on 11 January 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Husband: Ng Chor Hing (Deceased)
Sons: Ng Yok Kuan
Ng Yoke Kin, James
Ng Yoke Weng
Grandson: Ng Weihao, Andy
Granddaughters: Wu Sihui
Wu Simin
Ng Shi Yun, Sedrilyn
Great Granddaughters: Leanne Seow
Daughters-in-law: Yu Lee Chein
Koh Kim Suang
Grandsons-in-law: Seow Chen Jie, Daniel
Law Si Hao, Mason
Great Grandsons-in-law: Hannah Seow
all relatives and friends.

Wake is held at Multi Purpose Hall
located between Blk 1-4 Everton Park.
Cortege will leave on 15 January 2019 (Tuesday)
to Mandai Crematorium Hall for cremation.



OM NAMA SHIVAYA

**MEENAL D/O
OLAGA THEVAN**

Age: 75

Departed on 01-01-2019

Husband: Durairajoo deceased

Dearly missed by All

Daughters & Sons-in-Law:

Poongkothai & S Veerappan,

Thilagavathi & S Theventhan

Sons & Daughters-in-Law:

D Chandramohan & Kalaicheli,

D Jivanandan & Stradevi

All Siblings, Grandchildren,

Inlaws, Relatives & Friends

Loving Mother & Grandmother

is resting in peace

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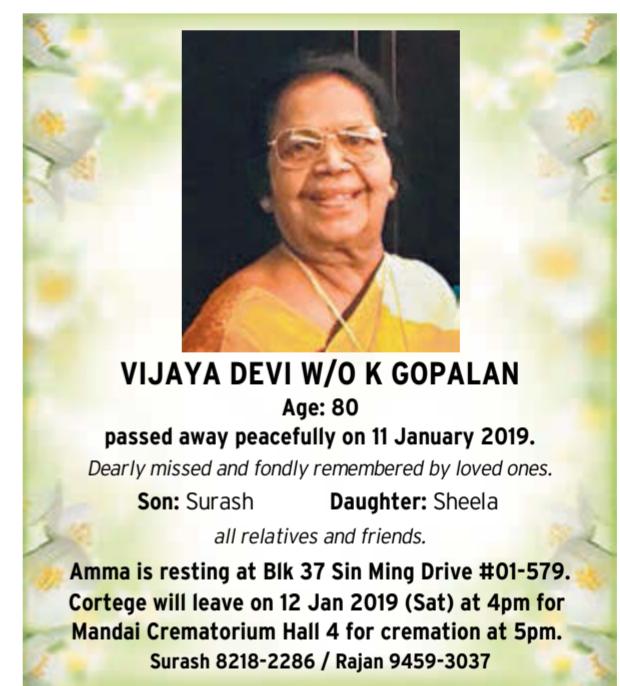
HP: 91072203/90072544

Cortege will leave on

12-01-2019, Sat, at 5pm

for cremation at Mandai

Crematorium Hall 1, 6.30pm.



VIJAYA DEVI W/O K GOPALAN

Age: 80

passed away peacefully on 11 January 2019.

Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Son: Surash **Daughter:** Sheela

all relatives and friends.

Amma is resting at Blk 37 Sin Ming Drive #01-579.

Cortege will leave on 12 Jan 2019 (Sat) at 4pm for

Mandai Crematorium Hall 4 for cremation at 5pm.

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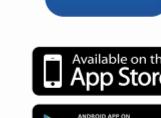
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COMPLACENT? NOT SPURS

Captain Lloris' advice is to take it one game at a time and be wary of being overtaken

Sazali Abdul Aziz
In London

Tottenham must not count their chickens before they hatch if they hope to clinch their first Premier League title this term.

Hugo Lloris, captain and goalkeeper of the club whose emblem is the cockerel while a golden one stands atop its White Hart Lane ground, issued the warning before they host a rejuvenated Manchester United tomorrow.

Lloris said the most important point of the season has arrived, adding: "February-March-April is the period when you win or lose your chance at the title, so the most important thing is stay focused, and take it game by game."

He knows what it takes; after all, he was the man who led France to World Cup glory in Russia last year.

Spurs have not won a major trophy since the League Cup in 2008. They have reached four Cup semi-finals since he signed from Lyon in 2012 and ended among the Premier League's top three in the last three seasons, including a runner-up finish in 2017.

But he felt the club are on the right path, saying: "My feeling is that we are going in the right way.

"We have so many talented play-

ers, we have one of the best managers and we are trying to build something strong and special."

"You cannot get success in one or two seasons, especially if you want to stay at a high level in the long term. Sometimes, it takes longer."

"The main thing is for the players to show their talent and commitment towards the shirt, week in and week out."

"But it's also true that, in football, the only thing people remember are the trophies."

"But it's not too late." Would a Spurs title come too late for the 32-year-old, one of the club's longest-serving players?

Saying his future is "difficult" to discuss, he said: "I feel really committed, towards the club, people who work in it and the fans. Staying so many years is something very important."

"But you never know, especially in football. I'm only focused on today and tomorrow."

msazali@sph.com.sg

• The writer's trip was hosted by AIA Singapore.

SEE ALSO C14

Brothers to Spur their team on at Wembley



Ow Yong brothers Chaan Hoa (left) and Chaan Loung had the experience of a lifetime when they attended a Tottenham training session at the Premier League club's training facility at Enfield, north London, yesterday. The brothers managed to get up close and personal with Spurs stars, including Harry Kane and Dele Alli, and will cheer the team on when they host Manchester United at Wembley tomorrow. Chaan Loung won the trip to see their beloved Spurs as part of the "AIA Mission: Spurs - Celebrate Courage Over Adversity" contest. PHOTO: AIA SINGAPORE

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Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp will recall most of his key men who were rested for their FA Cup third-round defeat at Wolves. But Dejan Lovren's injury leaves him short of options at centre back, with Joe Gomez and Joel Matip also sidelined. PHOTO: AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

KLOPP SEES NO NEED TO PANIC

Liverpool manager not too concerned by consecutive defeats ahead of Brighton trip

LONDON • Liverpool have lost their two games this year but manager Jurgen Klopp believes there is no reason to panic, with his side still four points ahead at the top of the Premier League.

The Reds lost 2-1 to second-placed Manchester City, who are on 50 points, before they lost to

Wolves by the same scoreline on Monday in the FA Cup third round.

Speaking at a pre-match press conference ahead of today's league trip to Brighton, Klopp said: "So far our season has been really good and now we need to carry on."

"Two weeks ago everyone was so excited about the distance be-

tween (us and City). Now we have lost two games, not nice but not a real problem."

Criticism of his decision to make nine changes for Wolves is still fresh in his ears, as the Reds have now been eliminated from both domestic Cup competitions at the first hurdle. But that will be a small price to pay should they land a first league title since 1990.

When asked if there is an advantage now that they can fully focus on the league, Klopp said: "It's my

preferred rhythm (having just one domestic game a week).

"It's our situation, it's not that we decided to go out of the Cups. We had to make changes (and play second-string players) because of the intensity of the games."

He called Brighton a good team, adding: "(Lewis) Dunk and (Shane) Duffy are outstanding centre-halves. (Davy) Propper is playing his best season in England and is a good pairing with (Dale) Stephens."

After that, they have another three very winnable home games against Leicester, Crystal Palace and Bournemouth plus a trip to West Ham before facing Bayern Munich in the Champions League.

Those five games provide them with a perfect platform to at least consolidate their lead, after the disappointment of losing their unbeaten league record to City to give the champions a foothold back in the title race.

Klopp will recall most of his key

players who skipped FA Cup duty, but an injury to Dejan Lovren leaves him short of options at centre-back with Joe Gomez and Joel Matip also sidelined. Fabinho may have to deputise in defence once more alongside the calming presence of Virgil van Dijk.

Brighton, with 26 points, are well-placed to achieve their principal target of avoiding relegation with a 10-point cushion above the drop zone, thanks in large part to a strong home record.

Only Tottenham and Chelsea have been victorious in 10 league games at the Amex Stadium. But Brighton manager Chris Hughton knows he has a tough task.

"I think he (Klopp) has been outstanding. This season shows what a great job he's done. Liverpool are better prepared and it's all led by him," he said. AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

BRIGHTON V LIVERPOOL
Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227, 11pm

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

TODAY

West Ham v Arsenal
Ch102 & Ch227, 8.30pm

Brighton v Liverpool
Ch102 & Ch227, 11pm

Leicester v Southampton
Ch103 & Ch228, 11pm

Crystal Palace v Watford
Ch104 & Ch229, 11pm

Cardiff v Huddersfield
Ch105 & Ch230, 11pm

Burnley v Fulham
Ch106 & Ch231, 11pm

Chelsea v Newcastle
Ch102 & Ch227, tomorrow, 1.30am

TOMORROW

Everton v Bournemouth
Ch102 & Ch227, 10.15pm

Tottenham v Man United
Ch102 & Ch227, Monday, 12.30am

MONDAY

Man City v Wolves
Ch102 & Ch227, Tuesday, 4am

All on Singtel TV & StarHub

STANDINGS

P W D L F A Pts

	1	Liverpool	21	17	3	149	10	54
	2	Man City	21	16	2	156	17	50
	3	Tottenham	21	16	0	54	21	48
	4	Chelsea	21	13	5	338	16	44
	5	Arsenal	21	12	5	446	31	41
	6	Man United	21	11	5	543	32	38
	7	Leicester	21	9	4	825	23	31
	8	Wolves	21	8	5	830	31	29
	9	Watford	21	8	5	823	25	29
	10	West Ham	21	8	4	929	32	28
	11	Everton	21	7	6	831	31	27
	12	Bournemouth	21	8	3	10	31	27
	13	Brighton	21	7	5	924	29	26
	14	Crystal Palace	21	6	4	11	19	26
	15	Newcastle	21	4	6	11	15	29
	16	Burnley	21	5	3	13	21	42
	17	Cardiff	21	5	3	13	19	41
	18	Southampton	21	3	7	11	21	38
	19	Fulham	21	3	5	13	19	47
	20	Huddersfield	21	2	4	15	13	37

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HYUNDAI

Match points: Tottenham v Manchester United



Key battles

Harry Kane v Victor Lindelof

Kane will have a last outing alongside his sidekick before Son Heung-min goes to the Asian Cup. With seven goals in his last six games, the Englishman has been prolific, often dropping deeper while Son sprints ahead of him. It has been a breakthrough year for Lindelof but United's defence struggled with Spurs' speed when they won 3-0 at Old Trafford.



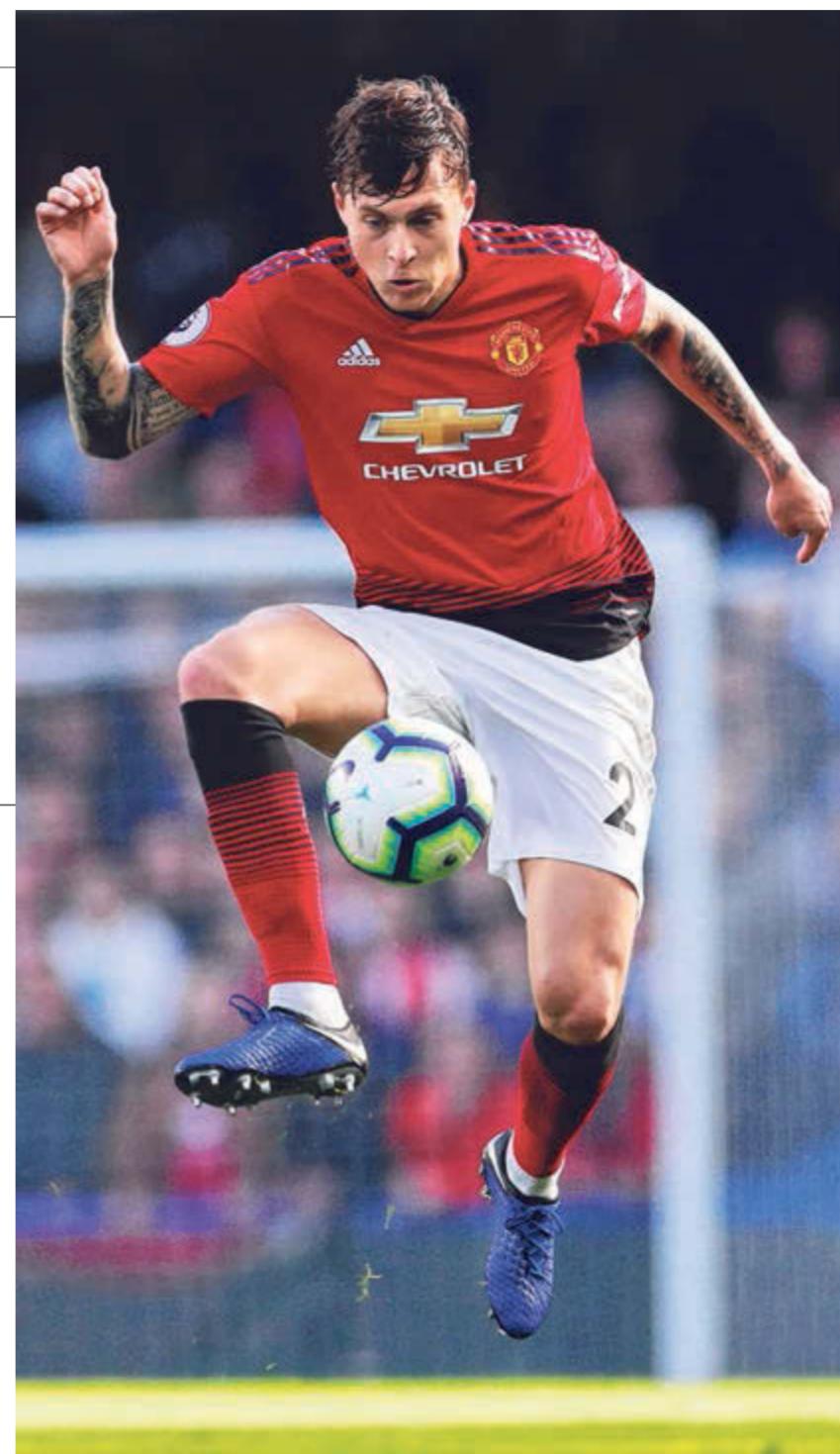
Harry Winks v Paul Pogba

Pogba was dropped by ex-manager Jose Mourinho for his final three league games. He has four goals and three assists in four games under new boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, but is recovering from a shocking tackle by Newcastle's Jonjo Shelvey. With Victor Wanyama out and Eric Dier a doubt, Winks is Spurs' defensive midfielder, and must halt Pogba.



Toby Alderweireld v Marcus Rashford

Alderweireld was a summer target of Mourinho. Instead, he has stayed at Spurs, who extended his contract until next year. While Romelu Lukaku has been prolific of late, Rashford has been fundamental to Solskjaer's United, stretching defences with pace after finally being given a role as the striker. He has three goals in four starts.



Key statistics

Five-star start

Wwww

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is the second United manager to win his first five games after Matt Busby.

Unwanted hat-trick

LLL

Tottenham have lost their last three home Premier League games against United.

Win or bust

0

Spurs are the only team who have not drawn a league game, with 16 wins and five losses.

Goal machine

3.8

Goals Spurs have averaged in their last six games in all competitions, 23 goals in all.

Men in form

3

Goals United striker Romelu Lukaku has scored in his last three appearances, two in the league and one in the FA Cup.

Full house

Newcastle	2-0
Bournemouth	4-1
Huddersfield	3-1
Cardiff City	5-1

United were the only team to take 12 points in the Christmas-New Year games.

TEXT: RICHARD JOLLY PHOTOS: REUTERS, EPA-EFE

BigMatch

UNITED'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE TO COLLIDE

Former star and interim boss Solskjaer faces Spurs' coach, his rival for Old Trafford red-hot seat

Richard Jolly

In 1998, Tottenham had agreed to buy a striker for £5.5 million (\$S9.5 million). Both clubs' chairmen had signed the form, until the selling manager intervened.

Alex Ferguson told Ole Gunnar Solskjaer he did not want him to leave Old Trafford. It proved one of the former Manchester United man-

ager's finest decisions: In May 1999, the substitute Solskjaer scored the Champions League final winner.

Twenty-one years later, it still has repercussions. Had the Norwegian joined Spurs, he would not have been the Manchester United great summoned to reconnect an under-achieving club with its glorious past. And without that, he would not be in with a chance of replacing Jose Mourinho as United's permanent manager.

His greatest rival for the post is tomorrow's opponent: Tottenham versus United doubles up as a shoot-out between Solskjaer and Mauricio Pochettino.

The Norwegian brings a knowl-

edge of life inside Old Trafford, an understanding of attacking traditions and the popularity that stems from both his playing days and his likeable personality.

He appeals to the nostalgic, but has shown an immediate ability to galvanise United's younger players. He has ditched some of Mourinho's pragmatic choices and played positive football.

Yet his disastrous spell at Cardiff raises questions if he can prosper at a higher level than Norwegian club Molde. His five United wins have come against inferior opponents.

This is a first test against peers whereas Tottenham, fresh from defeating Chelsea in their League Cup

game, already have one major scalp this week and a growing record of beating the best at home.

Whereas Solskjaer has had five games at United, Pochettino is in his fifth year at Tottenham. The Premier League's most consistent over-achiever promises sustainability.

Solskjaer has had an early effect on United's players, liberating them and allowing them to enjoy themselves, but, deprived of money to spend, Pochettino has continued to improve his Spurs charges. The Argentinian has shown he is tactically clever, swopping formations.

Solskjaer is channelling his mentor Ferguson, looking to outscore opponents. Pochettino's theories

owe more to his initial influence, Marcelo Bielsa, the current Leeds manager who was the former coach of Argentina and Chile.

But a philosophy based around pressing and passing at pace makes Pochettino, like Manchester City's Pep Guardiola and Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp, ultra-modern.

Yet if the Argentinian is the outsider, he has a synergy with United: A willingness to trust in youth earned him Ferguson's admiration.

If two enthusiasts offer to be the antithesis of the serial complainer Mourinho, they are his opposite in another respect. Neither has won a trophy in a major league whereas United's last two appointments have been Champions League winners. That does not rule either out, which shows how much an ethos now matters. United have lost their way.

Solskjaer is a reminder of what they stood for, Pochettino of what they could embody. But, as they meet, it is Pochettino who has shown he belongs at this level and Solskjaer who has it all to prove.

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TOTTENHAM V MAN UNITED
Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227,
Monday, 12.30am

Gunners can only loan, not buy players: Emery

LONDON • Unai Emery has said Arsenal will be able to sign players only on loan this month.

The Arsenal manager, who has no issue with Aaron Ramsey reportedly close to leaving for Juventus on a free transfer at the end of the season, has been linked with moves for Barcelona's Denis Suarez and Sevilla's Ever Banega.

Speaking ahead of today's trip to West Ham, the Spaniard admitted he would have to wheel and deal in the January transfer window as funds were limited.

"We cannot sign permanently," he said. "We can only loan players. I know the club is working on possibilities of which players can help us with big performances like we need now. I cannot say more."

Emery worked with Banega and Suarez at Sevilla and the latter is out of favour at the Nou Camp and would help to solve Arsenal's lack of attacking width.

However, it remains to be seen whether the club can secure a loan for the 25-year-old midfielder, with Barcelona asking for £10 million

(\$S17.2 million). Sevilla are likely to place an even heftier price on Banega, who has been a key figure for Emery in the past.

"I know this player and he's a very good player," the 47-year-old said.

The former Sevilla boss also insisted he was not unhappy with Arsenal's financial restrictions.

He added: "We are working with the players who are with us now. Also, we are giving chances to the young players and finding with them the regularity to be consistent when we need them to be."

"I am very happy. I know it is not easy for us now in this transfer market and, if we can find one player who can help us like we need, with the quality and a different player for getting in our squad, we are going to do it."

"But I am happy with every player today. It is really some injuries that didn't help us in the last matches because we struggled with different injuries with the players... if one or two players can come and help us, that is perfect."

The Gunners' defensive prob-

lems have eased for their visit to the London Stadium, with Hector Bellerin, Konstantinos Mavropanos, Shkodran Mustafi and Nacho Monreal all returning to full training earlier this week.

Midfielder Mesut Ozil could also play against Manuel Pellegrini's men, after shaking off the knee injury that has kept him out since Boxing Day. THE GUARDIAN

WEST HAM V ARSENAL
Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227,
8.30pm

MAKING ENDS MEET

We are working with the players who are with us now. Also, we are giving chances to the young players and finding with them the regularity to be consistent when we need them to be.

“

UNAI EMERY, Arsenal manager, is counting on youth to meet fixture demands.

BAYERN EYE CHELSEA TEEN

Hudson-Odoi draws top bid of £35m but Blues are livid with tapping up of prospect

GETTING BETTER
He is working very well at the moment, so I am happy with the player.

MAURIZIO SARRI Chelsea manager, rates the 18-year-old winger Callum Hudson-Odoi, who is also wanted by German champions Bayern Munich.

LONDON • While the neutral observer may be wondering what all the fuss is about over Callum Hudson-Odoi, who has yet to start in the Premier League, Bayern Munich believe he can be their equivalent of Jadon Sancho.

The Borussia Dortmund winger opted to leave Manchester City for Germany in August 2017 in search of more playing time, and the England international has not looked back since, becoming one of the hottest prospects in European football.

The six-time defending Bundesliga champions also clearly feel Hudson-Odoi has what it takes to follow in Sancho's footsteps, which

is why the English winger has been the subject of four separate bids since last month – the latest being £35 million (\$S60.2 million), catapulting the relatively unknown 18-year-old into the limeight.

But Chelsea have been incensed at the lengths Bayern are going to court their academy product, who has been handed successive starts in their last two games against Nottingham Forest and Tottenham for the first time in his career.

While the club are still hoping a run in the first team, which could continue today in the league against Newcastle at Stamford Bridge, might persuade him to stay, it appears his head has been turned.

According to Sky Sports, Hudson-Odoi wants to leave the club and, with only 18 months left on his deal, he holds all the cards.

With his contract situation leaving Chelsea in a bind, Blues boss Maurizio Sarri directed his ire at the Bavarian giants at his press conference yesterday, claiming Bayern "did not respect our club" after sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic said in midweek Hudson-Odoi was a player they "would definitely like to have".

He blasted: "It's not professional because they are talking about a player under contract with Chelsea. I am very, very happy with the player because he is improving a lot in the defensive phase."

"Now he needs to improve in some movements without the ball. He is working very well at the moment, so I am happy with the player and I would like to have him in the future."

The Italian revealed he had recommended to the club hierarchy

that two players be signed in the January transfer window, but declined to give any names or state their positions. "I spoke with the club and the club know very well my opinion," he said.

He also shot down speculation over Willian's future, despite British media reports linking the "very important" Brazil forward with Barcelona, insisting "it's impossible to lose him in January".

However, Sarri hinted that misfiring £60 million club-record signing Alvaro Morata could leave on loan, but reiterated it would only happen if there was a like-for-like "replacement" for the striker, who has scored just five league goals in 16 games this term. THE GUARDIAN

CHELSEA V NEWCASTLE
Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227, tomorrow, 1.30am

SportsWorld

Slingers fend off Wolf Warriors for away win

The Singapore Slingers survived a fourth-quarter onslaught away to Zhuhai Wolf Warriors to escape with a 107-103 Asean Basketball League win.

Centre John Fields led all scorers in China with 36 points, while fellow American Xavier Alexander converted the game-tying and match-ending free throws. Singaporeans Delvin Goh and Tay Ding Loon impressed with 14 and nine points respectively against the hosts, who featured former NBA players Eddy Curry (19 points) and Michael Taylor (32 points).

The Slingers (7-4) rose to fourth in the 10-team league.

Loh continues fine run but Yeo shown the exit

Singapore's world No.125 shuttler Loh Kean Yew stunned Chinese Taipei's sixth seed Wang Tzu-wei 21-19, 20-22, 21-11 in 69 minutes last night to make the semi-finals of the Princess Sirivannavari Thailand Masters.

The qualifier will face Frenchman Brice Leverdez today in the Level 5, Super 300 tournament.

In the women's singles, Loh's compatriot Yeo Jia Min lost 14-21, 21-15, 21-18 to Indonesia's Fitriani Fitriani in an hour.

US cops seek Ronaldo DNA sample over case

LOS ANGELES • Police in Nevada have formally asked the Italian authorities to obtain a DNA sample from Juventus football star Cristiano Ronaldo in the investigation of accusations that he raped a woman a decade ago in Las Vegas.

Ronaldo, 33, has maintained he is innocent of rape and said through his lawyer on Thursday that the sexual encounter in question was consensual. The matter came to light in September last year when Kathryn Mayorga sued Ronaldo in Clark County District Court in Nevada, accusing him of raping her in a Las Vegas hotel penthouse suite in 2009, then paying her US\$375,000 (\$S506,700) in hush money.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Aldridge scores 56 as Spurs beat Thunder

LOS ANGELES • LaMarcus Aldridge tallied a career-high 56 points, as the San Antonio Spurs overcame Russell Westbrook's triple double by outgunning the Oklahoma City Thunder 154-147 in a double overtime National Basketball Association thriller on Thursday.

His epic performance saw him surpass his previous career high of 45 points which he set against the Utah Jazz last March. Westbrook had 24 points, 24 rebounds and 13 assists.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



Asian Cup 2019

Socceroos bounce back to knock Palestine out

DUBAI • Australia's Jamie Maclarenn believes he is ready for more goals after scoring for the first time for his country in the 3-0 Asian Cup win over Palestine in Dubai yesterday.

"It's been a long time coming. I've stayed on my path and kept working. I know I'm a goal-scorer. It was going to come one way or another," the striker, who made his 10th appearance for the Socceroos, said on Fox Sports.

Defending champions Australia recovered from their shock 1-0 opener defeat by Jordan and

moved within sight of the last 16.

Goals from Maclarenn, Awer Mabil and Apostolos Giannou put the much-improved Socceroos second in Group B with one game to go.

The Aussies will now go into Tuesday's final group game against Syria with renewed confidence, while the Jordanians are already through to the last 16 after beating Syria 2-0 on Thursday.

Australia coach Graham Arnold dropped the under-performing Massimo Luongo and Robbie Kruse in favour of Jackson Irvine and Chris Ikonomidis, who impressed

as substitutes against Jordan.

It was a far more dynamic team that opened their account on 18 minutes, when Tom Rogic picked out Maclarenn who scored with a glancing header.

Two minutes later, gold-clad Australia were 2-0 up as Ikonomidis lofted a ball to the far post where Mabil sneaked in unmarked for a first-time finish.

Substitute Giannou then nodded in a deserving third for the Socceroos in the final minute.

"Many people say I can't head the ball and today I showed them," Ma-

clarenn added.

"We knew what we had to do today, win the game. Straight from the start we scored two early goals and that really settles us."

The win undoubtedly pleased Arnold, who was always confident that his players would bounce back from a defeat he considered an anomaly.

The result leaves Australia poised to take second place in the group, barring a defeat by Syria.

With Jordan now on six points, Australia can no longer top the group as head-to-head record is

used to rank teams on level points.

Even with a loss to Syria, Australia could still qualify for the round of 16 as one of the four best third-placed teams.

In Group C, China beat the Philippines 3-0 through goals from Wu Lei (two) and Yu Dabao to top of the group on six points.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, THE GUARDIAN

ASIAN CUP
Vietnam v Iran: Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208, 6.50pm
Yemen v Iraq: 9.20pm
Lebanon v Saudi Arabia: 11.50pm

Japan sports chief charged in France

PARIS • Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) chief Tsunekazu Takeda yesterday denied bribery or any wrongdoing, after being indicted in France for "active corruption" linked to the Tokyo 2020 Games bid. He claimed that he had cooperated with a judge at a hearing in Paris on an unspecified date, insisting he was "not involved in any wrongdoing such as bribery".

Takeda, who also heads the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) marketing commission and has led the JOC since 2001, was adamant "no new facts" had come out during the hearing, adding "wrong information that I was indicted has been shared".

He said: "I apologise for the huge worries that have been brought to the people of Japan, who have given so much support to the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, and in order to put every doubt to rest, I intend to continue cooperat-

ing with investigations."

The IOC yesterday issued a statement saying: "Mr Takeda continues to enjoy the full presumption of innocence."

However, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike admitted she was "very surprised" by the new development.

A French judicial source told Agence France-Presse that Takeda was indicted on Dec 10 by magistrates looking into a payment of nearly €2 million (\$S3.1 million) made before Tokyo was chosen to host next year's Olympics.

The investigation, launched in 2016, centred on two tranches labelled "Tokyo 2020 Olympic Game Bid", made by a Japanese bank to Black Tidings, a Singapore-based firm linked to Papa Massa Diack.

The Senegalese is the son of Lamine Diack, the former head of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

The transfers were made before and after the IOC vote that decided the host city. They were discovered as part of a separate French case looking into allegations of corruption and money laundering linked to a cover-up of Russian athletes' doping by international sports officials.

Japanese officials said at the time they were legitimate consultant fees, and a panel commissioned by the IOC said in September 2016 it had found them to be legitimate.

In France, investigative magistrates can decide to charge companies or individuals in a procedure known as "mise en examen" when there are "serious and consistent" indications showing likely involvement in the matter under probe.

They can then decide whether to refer a case to trial, but are not involved after that stage.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, BLOOMBERG, REUTERS

Pair cycling to a para-cycling bronze



Singaporean para-cyclist Tee Wee Leong and his pilot Ang Kee Meng on the way to clinching Singapore's first medal at the 8th Para Asian Track Championships in Jakarta yesterday. The tandem cyclists clocked 4min 50.016sec in the men's 4,000m individual pursuit bronze-medal race, beating Malaysians Khairul Hazwan Wahab and pilot Faizal Mohamed Noh by 7.19sec. Tee, who is visually impaired, said: "We have fine-tuned our training programme and it is gratifying to see that the hard work has paid off." Japan's Kazuhei Kimura and pilot Takuto Kurabayashi won the gold, ahead of Malaysia's Aiman Asyraff Ahmad Bajuri and pilot Nur Rizuan Zainal. PHOTO: SDSC

MURRAY IN TOO MUCH PAIN TO CARRY ON

Scotsman, unable to shake off serious hip injury, says he will retire after Wimbledon

MELBOURNE • Still struggling with a hip injury that has limited him since June 2016, Andy Murray announced yesterday he would retire after Wimbledon in July, if not sooner.

He said the "driving factor" in the decision to end his playing career this year was due to the lingering pain and things came to a head during off-season training last month.

"Obviously, I've been struggling for a long time," he said in an emotional news conference in Melbourne. "I have pretty much done everything I could to try and get my hip feeling better, and it hasn't helped loads. It has been tough."

"I can still play to a level, (but) not a level that I'm happy playing at. I can play with limitations, that's not an issue, it's having the limitations."

"I spoke to my team, and I told them, 'I cannot keep doing this.' I needed to have an end point because I was playing with no idea when the pain was going to stop."

The Australian Open, where he is a five-time runner-up, starts on

Monday and his final match could potentially be against Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain.

Murray added: "I said to my team, 'I can get through this until Wimbledon.' That's where I would like to stop playing. But I'm not sure I'm able to play through the pain for another four or five months."

Admitting the ongoing injury had taken an emotional toll, he said he had spoken "a number of times" with psychologists, but the pain meant it was no longer "fun or enjoyable (playing tennis) any more".

He also revealed he was "seriously considering" hip resurfacing surgery, which would alleviate the pain and allow him to "have a better quality of life".

The 31-year-old became the first British men's Grand Slam singles champion in 76 years when he won the US Open in 2012.

He won Wimbledon in 2013 and 2016, and clinched two successive Olympic gold medals at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Games.

He reached No. 1 for the first time



Former world No. 1 Andy Murray breaks down in tears during an emotional press conference yesterday in Melbourne. He said the pain from his hip was so severe he could not be sure of playing through it till Wimbledon in July, the scene of his greatest triumphs in 2013 and 2016 (below). PHOTOS: EPA-EFE, AGENCIE FRANCE PRESSE

in November 2016, holding on to it through Wimbledon the following year, even though he was often in the shadow of his Big Four counterparts Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Murray, a counter-puncher who wears down opponents through physicality and guile, earned a reputation as one of the hardest-working players of his generation.

He was also admired by many in women's tennis for his vocal support of the WTA Tour and his decision to hire Amelie Mauresmo as his coach in 2014.

But, having dropped to 230th in the world after repeated injury layoffs, he has now accepted his mor-

tality in the sport.

Juan Martin del Potro led the tributes, urging him to "keep fighting" despite his impending retirement.

The world No. 5, who like Murray is no stranger to debilitating injuries, tweeted: "I can imagine your pain and sadness. I hope you can overcome this. You deserve to retire on your own terms."

Nadal posted on the Instagram account of his tennis academy that he was "an example of a great athlete and person", while Andrea Petkovic felt he would not only "be a huge loss for tennis in general, but also for the WTA" as he always spoke "up for women".

REUTERS/NYTIES



TO BE GREAT OR NOT TO BE
I can still play... (but) not at a level that I'm happy playing at. I can play with limitations, that's not an issue, it's having the limitations.

“

ANDY MURRAY, three-time Grand Slam champion, sees no point in struggling on if he cannot return to his best.

SportingLife

Smart, sensitive, swift... the swearing Scot was an original



Rohit Brijnath

Assistant Sports Editor

Every day an athlete retires, packs his boots or folds her leotard, and what this feels like we'll never

understand. At 31, we'll never know what it's like to give up the craft that made us. At 31, we'll rarely be undone by a failing body. At 31, we'll never have to accept that our best body of work is possibly behind us.

But at 31, that's where Andy Murray is. Yesterday he said he is done with tennis and of course he cried.

In a room in Melbourne yesterday, he announced that his career would end at Wimbledon but that he might not even make it past the Australian Open. Pain had

beaten him. His hip had turned on him. He came to say this but he couldn't, his larynx clogged with emotion, and he left the room briefly before he returned to speak.

For 18 months his hip has been a talking point and now it had become a breaking point. "The pain is not allowing me to enjoy competing, training or any of the stuff I love about tennis," he said. Pain is every athlete's pal but for an athlete to retire because of it points to its severity. Especially Murray, whose game was built on hardship and whose grit was a thing of reliable beauty.

In the cycle of sport, athletes come and go and we pause briefly in respect and carry on. Some are greater than others, some just more original. Murray had to love, if not for that deadpan manner, then for his dry humour and his desire.

Eventually he was knighted and this was fitting. Other men won trophies but he embarked on grand quests. In 2012 he was the first Brit to win a Grand Slam title in 76 years, in 2013 the first to win Wimbledon in 77 years, in 2015 part of the team who won the Davis Cup after 79 years. Even his rallies took a while.

He was not pretty but persistent, a player smart but sulky, swift but a swearer, often aggrieved on court as if perfection was purposely eluding him. He had to be hard on himself because he had to work so hard to make himself.

To compare him (three Grand Slam titles) to Roger Federer (20), Rafael Nadal (17), Novak Djokovic (14) – even though he had 29 wins against them – is to miss the point of Murray. It was not the number of his wins but what he gave of himself to get them. He was not their equal and yet he went to No. 1, a man first because he refused to be outlasted.

He could make you cry, as he did himself while making an evocative speech when he lost the 2012 Wimbledon final to Federer. "I am going to try this (to speak) and it's not going to be easy," he said and then paused for 35 seconds, overcome, as his people applauded him.

Murray stood up for people, even Nick Kyrgios. He could possibly be the only male athlete to earn such a headline in Buzzfeed: "13 Andy Murray Quotes About Sexism That Prove He's The Best." He hired Amelie Mauresmo as his coach, defended her, called himself a

feminist and was an articulate advocate for equal prize money. He was his wise mother's formidable son.

I met him once in December 2015 for 15 minutes and among other things I asked about his raising of funds for refugees and whether he felt athletes should use the platforms they have to speak out on issues or if it's a personal thing. "I do think it's a personal thing. If you want to..."

Do you want to?

To compare him (three Grand Slam titles) to Federer (20), Nadal (17), Djokovic (14) – even though he had 29 wins against them – is to miss the point of Murray. It was not the number of his wins but what he gave of himself to get them. He was not their equal and yet he went to No. 1, a man first because he refused to be outlasted.

"Yeah, if it's something I care about. Thing is there are so many great causes out there and so many terrible things going on... nobody can do enough. You have to do good for the things that are close to you... for me I love animals, so I like to do things with animals. A couple of my friends have had cancer so I wanted to do something for that."

"Earlier in the year when I saw images and photos and some video clips on the news of what was going on with the refugees and the young children, then I was like, 'Jeez, that's terrible.' You can never imagine that because of where you grow up, just because of where you're born, you're lucky enough not to be in that position and, yeah, I wanted to try and do something to help."

It was another reminder that here was a man not of hubris but compassion and so the game must keep Murray, must ensure he eventually returns as coach or administrator or commentator.

He still has a match to play at this Open where he has been to five finals but never won. He is world No. 230 and plays Roberto Bautista Agut, No. 23, and he will probably lose. This first round may be his last round, but he will wince and sprint for that is who he is. A man of miles and motion who has run himself to a standstill. And who weeps because his chase of his best sporting self is finally over.

rohitb@sph.com.sg

LOTTERY				
TOTO				
Fri, 11 Jan 2019 Draw No. 3439/2019				
Group 1 Prize \$5,000,000				
Winning Numbers				
01	02	13	18	41
46				
Add. No.				

Information on winning shares is not available at press time.
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SPORTS FIXTURES HIGHLIGHTS				
Event	Home	Away	Timing	Venue
Sat, 12 Jan 2019				
A League	Wellington	Central Coast	2.35pm	LW
A League	Melbourne Vict	Newcastle Jets	4.50pm	LW
Asian Cup	Vietnam	Iran	7.00pm	LW / SB
Spanish League	Leganes	Huesca	8.00pm	LW / SB
English Premier	West Ham	Arsenal	8.30pm	LW / SB
Asian Cup	Yemen	Iraq	9.30pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Crystal Palace	Watford	11.00pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Leicester	Southampton	11.00pm	LW / SB
English Premier	Brighton	Liverpool	11.00pm	LW / SB
English League Champ	Wigan	Aston Villa	11.00pm	LW / SB
Spanish League	Valencia	Valladolid	11.15pm	LW / SB
Sun, 13 Jan 2019				
Asian Cup	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia	12.00am	LW / SB
Italian Cup	Sampdoria	Milan	1.00am	LW / SB
English Premier	Chelsea	Newcastle	1.30am	LW / SB
English League Champ	Millwall	Blackburn	1.30am	LW / SB
Spanish League	Girona	Alaves	1.30am	LW / SB
Italian Cup	Bologna	Juventus	3.45am	LW
Spanish League	Villarreal	Getafe	3.45am	LW

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THE STRAITS TIMES SINGAPOREAN OF THE YEAR 2018
PRESENTED BY **UBS**

The Straits Times Singaporean of the Year award, organised in partnership with UBS for the fourth year running, seeks to honour the positive impact made by Singaporeans and celebrate the triumph of the human spirit

Kenneth and Adeline Thong
The Thongs not only open their house to young people without a roof over their heads to live in for free, but they also recreate a home within a house for them. Both left their jobs to be present in the lives of young people.

Read about the other finalists at str.sg/soty2018 and tell us who should be the Singaporean of the Year 2018 by Jan 15, 6pm

Cast your vote now at str.sg/soty18vote
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Global influencer Nicole Warne talks marriage, milestones and her move to New York City

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THE STRAITS TIMES STAR OF THE MONTH

PRESENTED BY **100 PLUS**

December winner: Nurul Suhaila Saiful

BEATING PAIN TO EARN TITLE

World champ wants more after bouncing back from disappointment at Asian Games

Nicole Chia

LOFTY TARGETS
I had such big dreams. I never knew it was this hard to get here; one title is so hard (to achieve), what more multiple titles... I'll take it one competition at a time but my goal stays the same.

NURUL SUHAILA SAIFUL, on her aim to win more world titles.

Both are backed by F&N's 100Plus.

Said ST deputy sports editor Lim Han Ming: "It isn't easy to come back from a devastating disappointment like a medal-less outing at the Asian Games."

"We were heartened to see Suhaila bounce back to clinch her first world title and we hope she continues to dream big."

It has been almost a month since Suhaila won the world title, but recognition that semi-final still evokes strong feelings.

"When I went into the warm-up area, what I did wrong was I went in thinking of the outcome of the competition instead of the process and how I was going to fight," said Suhaila, who added that a pep talk from team captain Sheik Farhan Sheik Alauddin helped her to regain her composure.

"So I isolated myself from everyone, taught myself how to breathe again and reminded myself of all the tough training I went through."

"The only thing that would determine whether I won or lost was whether I believed in myself... so I wiped my tears, breathed in and told myself I've been ready for this fight for a very long time, so this is my time to beat her."

In the final, she realised that she had overcome her main obstacle

(Suhaila) and that "no one was stopping me from (winning) that gold".

A maiden world title was the "perfect ending" to a tough year in which she returned empty-handed from Jakarta, where silat was an Asiad medal sport for the first time.

Recalling how it took her months for her feelings of doubt to dissipate, she said: "(It) hurt my confidence. It felt like all the months of hard training was for nothing."

"After every major Games, I would come home with at least a medal and preparation for the Asian Games started a year before."

"But I believe that if you're denied an opportunity, a greater one will come for you (later)."

It did.

Last month's victory also marks her first step towards a dream she has had since age 10 – being a multiple world champion.

Laughing, she said: "I had such big dreams. I never knew it was this hard to get here; one title is so hard (to achieve), what more multiple titles... I'll take it one competition at a time but my goal stays the same."

She knows remaining at the top is more difficult than getting there,

and she intends to look to teammates Sheik Farhan and Shakir Juanda, who have won three and two world titles respectively, as role models.

"She added: "Having teammates you can look up to and follow will make it easier for me (to cope with the increased pressure and expectations)."

"I'm more motivated now to do better and I feel I'm capable of doing anything. So I'm really excited to see where this takes me in 2019."

cnicole@sph.com.sg



Silat exponent Nurul Suhaila Saiful, The Straits Times Star of the Month for December, receiving her award from F&N Foods brand manager Shannon Sia. With them is ST deputy sports editor Lim Han Ming. ST PHOTO: GAVIN FOO

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GREEN LIGHT FOR GREEN OCBC CYCLE

Fresh initiatives include planting trees and using more recycled items in 'iconic event'

Wang Meng Meng

A year ago, Daniel Koh participated in The Straits Times Ride at the OCBC Cycle and completed the 23km event. Bitten by the cycling

bug, the Singapore Institute of Technology undergraduate decided to crank it up a gear, signing up for the 42km Sportive Ride this year.

"Last year was my first time at the OCBC Cycle and I liked how the whole cycling community came to-

gether, regardless of whether they are recreational or hardcore cyclists," he said. "I enjoyed myself so much that I want to try the Sportive Ride to challenge myself."

Koh, who was among the first to register for this year's event, was given an Aleoca mountain bike, a smartphone mounting bundle for his two-wheeler and 25 per cent off the \$45 early-bird registration fee.

The 11th edition of the OCBC Cy-

cle, Singapore's biggest cycling fiesta, will be held at the Singapore Sports Hub on May 11-12.

The non-competitive events comprise the ST and Sportive Rides. But the OCBC Cycle Speedway Club Championship, which sees club cyclists race 10 1km laps along Stadium Drive, will not be the sole competitive category, as the Corporate Championship will return after a one-year break with teams battling

for the orange jerseys.

Samuel Tsien, group chief executive officer of OCBC Bank, said: "The event has become an iconic event on Singapore's annual sporting calendar, thanks to the support of all our participants, our partners and our local authorities. Singapore's well-integrated pathways, our beautiful parks and seamless park connectors, have made it ever easier for people to take up cycling for exercise and recreation."

"Yet OCBC Cycle's allure, the opportunity to ride on closed roads that offer memorable and 'Instagrammable' sights, remains unique."

At last year's event, organisers engaged the help of the Sports Hub to recycle the plastic bottles used by participants and eco start-up Green Nudge helped to collect fruit peels for composting.

The green initiatives will be expanded this year to include planting one tree for every 50 cyclists, stopping the use of single-use plastics in event pack collection, wrapping medals in recycled paper, organising workshops on recycling and upcycling, as well as replacing trophies for the OCBC Cycle Speedway Championships with reusable steel tumblers.

And moving from the green to the evergreen, the event has also attracted veterans like Bernard Lau.

The 60-year-old limousine driver, who enjoys brisk walking and had participated in marathons, said: "I have been doing the ST Ride since it began (in 2015) as it is a very scenic and comfortable route for my heavier mountain bike."

"Besides, there are pre-event health talks and workshops on bike tuning that I'm interesting in attending."

meng@sph.com.sg

- Registration will open at ocbccycle.com on Monday, with early-bird discounts up to Feb 12.

Early birds catch rewards

Laura Chia

Husband and wife arrived at the launch site 22 hours before registration for the OCBC Cycle began at noon yesterday.

Engineers Bryan Phyo and Michelle Myat spent the time wandering around Orchard Gateway throughout Thursday afternoon, after arriving at 2pm.

Phyo, 33, secured the first spot in the official queue when it started at 9pm.

Their wait entailed them taking turns to have dinner and spending yesterday morning snatching 10 to 15 minutes of sleep occasionally on the floor of the mall, as well as playing games with other would-be participants to keep themselves entertained.

They were rewarded for their efforts, with Phyo wheeling away an Aleoca hybrid bike worth \$400, as well as a GoPro camera valued at \$440 for being the first to sign up for the May 11-12 event.

He was awarded a second gift bag, containing books written by The Straits Times journalists, for being the first to sign up for the 23km The Straits Times Ride, which is part of the OCBC Cycle.

Myat, 35, received an SP Connect bike bundle and an Aleoca mountain bike worth \$400 each.

Said Phyo: "I like the ST Ride because you can cycle at your own pace, so you can enjoy the scenery and stop to take selfies."

"I also like cycling on car-free roads, we don't normally get to do that. I always cycle on park connectors, so this is a good change."



Michelle Myat and husband Bryan Phyo with the bikes they received as gifts for being the first two people in the queue to register for the OCBC Cycle event. ST PHOTO: JASMINE CHOONG

Inspired by her husband's first experience in 2017, Myat decided to sign up with him the next year. This will be her second ST Ride.

"He told me about his experience on roads and the different views, so I thought we could do it together as a bonding activity," she said.

"I enjoyed cycling with him last year because we could relax and chit-chat and that also made it easier to complete the 23km."

For first-time ST Ride participant Janice Goh, this is a chance to push her limits.

"The most I've cycled was 12km

three years ago. So I wanted to challenge myself to see how far I could go," said the 27-year-old Singapore Institute of Technology student.

Despite having an examination on Monday, the criminology student still joined the queue at 11am yesterday and was rewarded with a

15 per cent discount off the \$45 fee.

"I'm looking forward to seeing the different sights of Singapore and I hope this event encourages people to cycle as it's more eco-friendly," she said.

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WIN
tickets to the SMBC Singapore Open

Some of the world's best golf players will be in town for the Jan 17-20 SMBC Singapore Open and The Straits Times, in partnership with 100Plus, is offering ST readers a chance to soak in the action. Answer the following question correctly to stand a chance of winning one pair of passes (there are 5 pairs of general passes and 2 pairs of hospitality passes available).

Q: 100Plus is the Official Hydration Partner of the SMBC Singapore Open 2019.

A: _____

E-mail your answers (subject header SMBC Singapore Open tickets), together with your name, IC and contact number to yufan.on@imsg.sg by 5pm, Saturday, Jan 12.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Passes are not exchangeable.
- By entering this contest, you agree to share data (including personal data) with organisers solely for the purposes of this contest.
- The organisers' decision is final.
- Employees of 100Plus, IMSC and Singapore Press Holdings are not eligible to enter this contest.
- Passes to the tournament are valid only for admission to the Serapong Course at the Sentosa Golf Club and such other designated area(s) (the "Venue") on the date(s) as shown. The Sentosa Island admission fee and vehicle fee shall still apply. Passes must be produced at appropriate entry points and/or demand by any authorised official. Pass holders shall display their passes at all times whilst they are at the venue.
- All passes are personal to the holders and are strictly non-transferable.

InGoodConscience

Respect for trio of women who fight against the odds



Rob Hughes

As the New Year unfolds, I admire three female athletes who compete in sports, in life, without any "Me Too" involvement.

Tennis player Caroline Wozniacki is about to start her defence of the Australian Open title, the first Grand Slam since she told us she has rheumatoid arthritis.

Not ideal, but not an excuse either. You don't cure arthritis, you find the right medicine to cope with it, and move on. That, in essence, was what Wozniacki, 28, told us when she revealed the illness during the WTA Finals in Singapore last October.

In another sport, a world away from the prize money of tennis, 26-year-old Layla Guscoth has put her career as a junior doctor on hold to play in the Australian Super Netball league for the Adelaide Thunderbirds. Later, in July, she hopes to turn the tables on Australia by representing England at the World Cup.

No doubt you know as much as me about the third lady in this trilogy. Poliana Viana, 26, is the mixed martial arts fighter who

battered a thug when he tried (at gunpoint, he claimed) to steal her mobile phone on a Rio de Janeiro street. She punched him, high-kicked him, and held him down in a neck choke until the cops arrived.

Robbery with menaces might never sound the same again.

But allow me to say a little more about each of the above.

Wozniacki, born in Denmark to Polish immigrants, is ready for the season – with one concession to her previous regimen of running a 42.195km marathon in between 10-month global tennis.

She will play fewer tournaments, sacrificing hope of regaining the world No. 1 ranking (from No. 3 currently). She's working on being more aggressive, going for winners to cut down long rallies.

But the taste of winning an Open, even with Serena Williams back, is more compelling than the dread of injections and medication when the pain and swelling in the joints can recur at any time.

Remember her words in Kallang last year? "Some days you wake up and you can't get out of bed. You feel like the fittest athlete, and all of a sudden, this."

She listened to specialists. She talked things through with her fiance, former National Basketball Association player David Lee, 35. She read up on rheumatoid

arthritis that affects 17.6 million people of all ages, in all walks of life.

It afflicts the hands, feet and wrists, all pressure points in tennis.

It (rheumatoid arthritis) afflicts the hands, feet and wrists, all pressure points in tennis. If Wozniacki has a plan, it is to try to win more through less stress and strain during her time left at the top.

If Wozniacki has a plan, it is to try to win more through less stress and strain during her time left at the top.

Time and career management is also the balance sought by Guscoth. Last year, when England shook the netball community by beating Australia to the gold medal at the Commonwealth Games on the Aussies' own Gold Coast, she was studying back in England.

Seeing the excitement from afar, knowing that the body clock of a sporting career has a finite time, she gave in to the temptation offered in Adelaide in professional netball.

Tracey Neville, the sister of former Manchester United and England footballers Gary and Phil, coaches the England netball side and persuaded Guscoth that her country needs her against South Africa, New Zealand and Australia at the World Cup in July.

It afflicts the hands, feet and wrists, all pressure points in tennis.

"We do it for the wins, the fun

and all those things you do sport for," Guscoth told the Daily Telegraph.

However, while netball gets financial support from UK Sport, she needs more in her life.

Guscoth is looking for a kidney research project in her free time.

Her approach reminds one of the sound mind in a sound body (Mens sana in corpore sano) idyll penned in the 2nd century AD by Roman poet Juvenal. We may not have seen anything like it since Bill Slater played for the Wolverhampton Wanderers team who won three league titles and the FA Cup in the 1950s.

Slater, who died last month, was both an outstanding footballer and a committed teacher whose daughter Barbara became an Olympic gymnast before rising to be the first female director of sport at the BBC.

One imagines her having to fight in a man's world, but presumably not as literally as Viana.

The Brazilian Ultimate Fighting Championship professional competes at strawweight (48 to 52kg). After her Rio street escapade, she said: "I threw two punches and a kick. He fell, then I caught him in a rear naked choke, sat on him and told him, 'Now we'll wait for the police!'"

Three women of different sports, Wozniacki, Guscoth and Viana, do it their way.

From a mere male, respect.

stsports@sph.com.sg



Ultimate Fighting Championship fighter Poliana Viana taught a would-be mugger a good lesson when he tried to steal her mobile phone. PHOTO: AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE

Saturday's Hong Kong (Sha Tin) form analysis

NEW ELEGANCE LOOKS GOOD

RACE 1 (1,200m)

9 Victor Emperor hasn't won in almost two years, that victory coming over this course and distance in this grade. His sole Class 5 attempt over the Sha Tin 1,200m since then resulted in a good fourth at the season-opening meeting in September and he is coming off a strong second last time out, too. He's a one to beat.

4 Peace On Earth has not raced over the Sha Tin 1,200m since May, 2015. His three track-and-trip efforts have been good enough, though, and his win two runs back was solid enough. He can't be overlooked.

2 Diamond Legend should enjoy a cosy run midfield. If he is presented at the right time, he's a chance.

5 Our Honour is a place chance.

RACE 2 (1,800m)

9 Dazzle Winner has got into the top four only twice from 11 starts, including a course-and-distance start two runs back. He has a good draw and no weight, so he may figure at odds.

2 Indigenous Star stayed on well for second last time out. A win is near and he's a leading player.

4 Young Glory is getting down to a mark where he can break through.

5 Fortune Patrol got into the placings last start for the first time at his 16th Hong Kong start. If he can go on with that, he's a contender.

RACE 3 (1,200m)

1 Midnite Rattler has to deal with an awkward draw. However, he's a

Class 1 winner who is now in Class 4 and a win in this grade is near, as he has shown at his last two starts. If he's able to get into a handy spot without doing too much, he's the one to beat.

5 Coby Oppa steps out for the first time. He's got natural talent and, as long as he jumps on terms, he's a contender.

4 Alphabet Invention is another who can figure on debut with blinkers applied.

6 Dor Dor should take plenty of improvement from his first start over the straight 1,000m. Getting up to 1,200m should suit, too.

RACE 4 (1,200m)

1 Super Star won nicely at his first start before sitting deep last time out and just sticking on fairly. He gets into a better draw now. With a softer run, he will be hard to beat.

7 Solar Wai Wai catches the eye of the debutants. Purchased out of the NZB Ready To Run Sale after clocking an impressive 10.28sec in his 200m breeze-up, he looks to have plenty of natural talent. He has trialled well enough and is a player at start No. 1.

9 Flying Lover has dropped 20 points in the ratings through 17 starts. He might be able to get into the finish at odds.

3 Break Record also debuts and is one to keep safe.

RACE 5 (1,400m)

4 Chairman Lo showed plenty of race sense on debut, only just going down to Speedy Dragon. Trainer

John Size is adept at, among many other things, progressing his horses early in their careers and Chairman Lo should be mighty hard to beat.

1 Joyful Family gets down into Class 4 for the first time. Crucially, he steps up to 1,400m for the first time, a trip that looks like he needs, and he can improve drastically.

8 Absolucool gets blinkers on for the first time and also gets the best draw of his Hong Kong career – still not great, but better. He bears close watching.

11 Hinyuen Swiftness is racing well enough to get a placing.

RACE 6 (1,650m)

2 Shampert gets down to Class 4 for the first time. He's been disappointing for the most part in Hong Kong, although he has shown flashes of talent at times. Now that he's down in grade, he deserves plenty of respect in this spot.

4 Chater Thunder has won two from eight over this course and distance. He may need to shed a few ratings points but he's always capable of getting into the finish.

7 Radiant Bunny stayed on well last time out. He's now gone 22 Hong Kong starts without a win but he should get a chance to break through before he drops down to Class 5.

12 Sunshine Universe has claims, too.

RACE 7 (1,800m)

5 New Elegance mixes his form and has only won once from 13 starts in Hong Kong. However, he's



New Elegance (purple cap) is coming off a fairly good last-start effort. He shapes as a likely winner in today's Race 7 at Sha Tin if the pieces fall into place. PHOTO: HKJC

RACE 8 (1,400m)

13 Right Choice won well on the dirt on debut before a good-enough run at his first turf outing last start. He gets up into Class 3 now with blinkers on and no weight on his back. He also has a good draw for the first time. He's hard to beat. His main danger is a familiar foe.

RACE 9 (1,650m)

14 Happy Force beat Right Choice last time out. He's won his last two at the course and distance and makes his own luck, so he is always a chance even now he's up into Class 3.

11 Smart Charade is his own worst enemy but his effort to sweep home from near the rear to win under Yasunari Iwata on HKIR day was noteworthy and he can't be ignored up in class.

6 Circuit Hassler can add some value to the exotics back to 1,400m.

RACE 10 (1,200m)

12 Invincible Missile did have the advantage of the rails draw on debut but the way in which he won was terrific. He steps up to Class 3 now from a poor draw but he can take another step forward.

11 Shimmer And Shine steps out for trainer Caspar Fownes for the first time. He looked a sprinter on the up as a three-year-old and he doesn't have any weight to carry. He's a player.

14 Tornado Twist sprinted nicely to win second-up. He gets a good draw and must be respected.

6 Loving A Boom can get into the placings.

• Comments courtesy of The Hong Kong Jockey Club

SATURDAY'S HONG KONG (SHA TIN) RACE CARD

CLASS 5 TURF - 1200m Stakes: HK\$690,000						CLASS 4 AWK - 1650m Stakes: HK\$920,000						CLASS 2 AWK - 1650m Stakes: HK\$1,950,000					
No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar	No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar	No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	RUN MOOCHI	KL MAN	N CALLAN	133	10	6	DOR DOR	C H YIP	URISPOLI	124	9	6	CIRCUITHASLER	AS CRUZ	K TEE TAN	129	9
2	DIAMOND LEGEND	A SCRZ	J MOREIRA	130	2	7	SPLENDOUR AND GOLD	C H YIP	URISPOLI	124	2	7	SPY	Z PURTON	Z PURTON	127	7
3	LUCKY TUNG	T HUNG	M YOUNG	130	1	8	SUPERHUNTER	C L LUI	C YHO	124	4	8	COPP	C SCHOFIELD	C SCHOFIELD	125	4
4	PEACE ON EARTH	K L MAN	M YOUNG	128	9	9	SUPER MODEL	C SHUH	H T MO	124	3	9	FOWNES	P O'SULLIVAN	URISPOLI	120	1
5	OUR HONOUR	L HO	H WONG	124	5	10	M MR MAGELLAN	Y TSUJII	H N WONG	122	12	10	DARING FIT	K HTING	ABADEL	118	5
6	SURE SUPREME	W YSO	K C LEUNG	120	7	11	I'M THE CONQUIST	K L MAN	A BADEL	121	10	11	SMART CHARADE	AT MILLARD	K C LEUNG	116	10
7	OOUTOU	AT MILLARD	K TEE TAN	118	3	12	POSSITIVELY HIGH	L HO	M P POON	118	6	12	DELIGHT EXPRESS	F CLOR	G VAN NIEKERK	116	2
8	RICH CITY FORTUNE	K HTING	H T MO	118	1	13	RED HORSE	C H YIP	W M LAI	118	1	13	HAPPY FORCE	T Y TUNG	M L YEUNG	115	12
9	VICTOR EMPEROR	P F YIU	M P POON	117	8												
10	JOYFUL FOREVER	P F YIU	M P POON	113	4												

CLASS 5 TURF - 1800m Stakes: HK\$690,000						CLASS 4 TURF - 1200m Stakes: HK\$920,000						CLASS 3 TURF - 1800m Stakes: HK\$1,380,000					
No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar	No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar	No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	RIGHTEOUS MATE	S DE SOUSA	J BYRNE	133	9	1	SUPER STAR	A TMILLARD	K TEE TAN	130	6	1	RULE XIAO BI	P O'SULLIVAN	K C LEUNG	133	4
2	INDIGENOUS STAR	P F YIU	A BADEL	130	7	2	LUCKY GUY	C H YIP	URISPOLI	125	5	2	SHAMPART	C FLOWERS	Z PURTON	131	8
3	POWER MAN	W YSO	A S ANNA	130	8	3	BEST RECORD	C SHUH	M CHADWICK	124	4	3	DEFEATABLE	J DEFERARI	K L MAN	127	7
4	YOUNG GLORY	D DEFERRARI	K TEE TAN	130	14	4	BEST RECORD	M CHADWICK	A BADEL	124	11	4	CHATER THUNDER	F CLOR	K L MAN	124	11
5	FORTUNE PATROL	P O'SULLIVAN	K C LEUNG	129	5	5	JUNZI	W YSO	A S ANNA	124	2	5	GOOD MISSION	J DEFERARI	K L MAN	124	11
6	MI BLAND	P O'SULLIVAN	Z PURTON	127	2	6	LET'S COME BACK	C FLOWERS	C SHUH	124	9	6	ENORMOUS HONOUR	Y TSUJII	M P POON	127	1
7	JOYFUL FATHER	P F YIU	M YOUNG	121	1	7	SOLAR WAI WAI	F CLOR	Z PURTON	124	8	7	RADIANT BUNNY	C H YIP	A BADEL	122	10
8	THE INVINCIBLE	W YSO	D WHYTE	118	3	8	VOYAGE STAR	T PYUNG	K C LEUNG	124	13	8	QUICK REVENGE	C SHUH	M L YEUNG	120	6
9	DAZZLE WINNER	Y TSUJII	M P POON	118	3	9	FLYING OVER	T PYUNG	N CALLAN	123	6	9	GRAND STABOUR	K L WU	W M LAI	120	6
10	PROUD SKY	L HO	J MOREIRA	118	12	10	SPEEDY DRAGON	D J HALL	J MOREIRA	120	1	10	ART OF RAW	W YSO	S DE SOUSA	118	2
11	SUPER GENEROSITY	C H YIP	W M LAI	116	10	11	BING										



Gold Star
(No. 1), the \$11
favourite,
producing
great
acceleration in
the final 200m
to take
yesterday's
\$75,000
Restricted
Maiden event
over 1,200m on
turf at Kranji.

ST PHOTO:
SALWA SUANDI

Friday's South Africa results

RACE 1

- 1st 1 Larry Jack (\$30-\$9)
2nd 5 Jadeed (\$15)
3rd 3 Exaltation (\$16)
4th 12 Gravitation Forecast \$59 Place Forecast
(1-5) \$25, (1-3) \$28, (3-5) \$24 **Tierce** \$1,646 Trio
\$377 **Quartet** No winner (\$322 carried forward)
Scratchings: 8 Chapel Cleeve, 9 King Carlos

RACE 2

- 1st 1 Malinda (\$12-\$6)
2nd 11 Hidden Power (\$16)
3rd 6 Angkor (\$7)
4th 7 Arctic Siren Forecast \$28 Place Forecast
(1-11) \$12, (1-6) \$5, (6-11) \$13 **Tierce** \$224 Trio \$31
Quartet No winner (\$714 carried forward)

RACE 3

- 1st 2 Abbeleigh (\$27-\$9)
2nd 6 Jaleika (\$6)
3rd 9 Wait A Sec (\$75)
4th 5 Aquilina Forecast \$17 Place Forecast (2-6) \$6,
(2-9) \$56, (6-9) \$36 **Tierce** \$5,763 Trio \$366
Quartet No winner (\$1,806 carried forward)

RACE 4

- 1st 6 Lloyd George (\$10-\$7)
2nd 8 Tom N Jerry (\$24)
3rd 1 Humble Addict (\$10)
4th 5 Wildcat Forecast \$64 Place Forecast (6-8)
\$18, (1-6) \$9, (1-8) \$45 **Tierce** \$462 Trio \$115
Quartet \$4,507

RACE 5

- 1st 7 Viva Le Bleu (\$40-\$11)
2nd 3 Bring Me More (\$8)
3rd 10 Kirinia (\$42)
4th 4 Beautiful Beat Forecast \$49 Place Forecast
(3-7) \$15, (7-10) \$92, (3-10) \$92 **Tierce** \$2,040 Trio
\$702 **Quartet** \$961 **Scratching:** 6 Fifth Of May

RACE 6

- 1st 1 Clever Kathy (\$30-\$9)
2nd 2 Madame Speaker (\$510)
3rd 7 Flame Of Fire (\$10)
4th 4 Vertical Forecast \$5 Place Forecast (1-2) \$3,
(1-7) \$9, (2-7) \$4 **Tierce** \$146 Trio \$20 **Quartet** \$976

RACE 7

- 1st 5 Aldo (\$18-\$7)
2nd 2 Pacific Spirit (\$6)
3rd 6 Amazon King (\$9) **4th** 7 Lord Windermere
Forecast \$13 Place Forecast (2-5) \$6, (5-6) \$9, (2-6)
5th **Tierce** \$68 Trio \$15 **Quartet** \$100

GOLD STAR SPARKLES

Cliff Brown-trained \$11 favourite steps up on nice debut third to score convincing victory

Tan Thean Loon

The writing was on the wall.

Gold Star showed in his debut on Dec 2 that an early victory was imminent. He rushed home to finish third behind the promising My Dreamliner in a Restricted Maiden Polytrack 1,000m race.

With improvement and the extra 200m on turf, the Gold Stable-owned three-year-old Australian-bred came in for strong support and duly obliged in Race 2 last night in the \$75,000 Restricted Maiden event over 1,200m.

The manner he scored from his

wide barrier suggested more wins will come for this progressive youngster trained by Cliff Brown.

The bay gelding jumped just averagely, somewhere in the middle bunch.

But jockey Michael Rodd relaxed the \$11 favourite nicely – albeit a bit wide – as Lady Boss led. Gamely then went up to eyeball the leader, Diamond King came across from his wide berth to swing around beautifully.

Gamely was first for home. Diamond King loomed up menacingly. Lady Boss said sayonara. Rodd angled out to give Gold Star a clear run. Once he saw daylight, Gold

Star lengthened strides beautifully. He levelled up with the leader 200m out and then cruised away to win by 1½ lengths. It looked like if you run the race again, Gold Star would greet the judge again.

A top run by the runner-up, outsider Runminderbinderrunn, who paid a thumping \$73 for a place. The Stephen-Gray-trained runner is certainly one for the notebook.

Brown said Gold Star ran impressively on debut and the 1,200m on turf suited his charge.

"Yeah, look, he did. He was very good that day, probably the 1,200m turf suits him," he said.

You know, probably the further they go, the better he will go. He's a little progressive. We'll wait and see but it was good.

I think 1,400m and a mile eventually. But we'll take it quiet and see

where we end up."

Rodd thought his hopes were dashed, being trapped a little wide, after jumping from barrier 10 in the field of 14 but Gold Star's class saw him through.

"He did not have the best of runs. He was wide, but he also missed the early scrimmage," said the Australian jockey.

"On the A course, where he was three deep the whole way, he would normally be in trouble, but he's a fit horse and he's got class."

Rodd admitted he gave Gold Star a "terrible ride" first-up – travelling too far back and gave his mount too much to do over the flying 1,000m.

He said the grass track yesterday was in the best state he'd ever ridden on since he has been here.

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FRIDAY'S SINGAPORE (LONG COURSE A/POLYTRACK) RESULTS

RACE 1

KS-D11200m
Winning stable: Big Valley. Trainer: H Taoka. Time: 1min 13.53sec (Going good). Forecast: \$629.
Tierce: \$24819. Quartet: \$48466, \$49624 (carried forward to the next race). P Forecast: \$122 (8-5), \$66 (5-3), \$33 (3-3). Trio: \$869. Course scratching: 10 Peer Gynt

RACE 2

RM (LC) 1200m
Winning stable: Gold. Trainer: C Brown. Time: 1min 13.94sec (good). Forecast: \$177. Tierce: \$4101.
Tierce: \$24819. Quartet: \$48466, \$49624 (carried forward). P Forecast: \$62 (1-10), \$222 (10-8), \$21 (1-8). Trio: \$1521. Course scratchings: 15 Agni 16 Archie

RACE 3

C4 1100m
Winning stable: Gold. Trainer: C Brown. Time: 1min 10.94sec (good). Forecast: \$177. Tierce: \$4101.
Tierce: \$24819. Quartet: \$48466, \$49624 (carried forward). P Forecast: \$62 (1-10), \$222 (10-8), \$21 (1-8). Trio: \$1521. Course scratchings: 15 Agni 16 Archie

RACE 4

N Juglali (6) 6 8 9 (484) 1
Winning stable: Synthetic. Trainer: KY Young. Time: 1min 06.56sec (good). Forecast: \$23.
Tierce: \$365. Quartet: \$6005. P Forecast: \$8 (3-6), \$20 (6-9), \$18 (3-9). Trio: \$10.

Race scratchings:

N Juglali (6) 6 8 9 (484) 1
Winning stable: Synthetic. Trainer: KY Young. Time: 1min 06.56sec (good). Forecast: \$23.

Tierce: \$365. Quartet: \$6005. P Forecast: \$8 (3-6), \$20 (6-9), \$18 (3-9). Trio: \$10.

Course scratchings: 2 Super Hero 7 Warrior King 8 Lucky Master

RACE 4

6 YULONG HOLY FLYING 59c 57 (28-10)
11 ZAHIR 50c 51 (168-39)
3 SONORAN 58 (24-10)
12 HEPHAESTUS 50 (42-11)
5 MY MONEY 55 (229-54)
10 AEONIS 56 (53-16)
8 PEGASUS ASSASSIN 52 (22-23)
10 PHUMET 55c 55 (41-79)
7 MA YOU 54.5 (75-18)
9 BERLINETA 53 c 52.5 (118-28)

Winning stable: Fortuna NZ Racing. Trainer: M Walker. Time: 1min 41.94sec (good). Forecast: \$24.

Tierce: \$1129. Quartet: \$6642. P Forecast: \$11 (6-2), \$44 (2-11), \$51 (6-11). Trio: \$267.

Course scratchings: 13 Destiny Knight

RACE 5

N Juglali (5) 2 2 1 (426) -

I Amrill* (8) 1 1 2 (440) Hd

B Vorster (6) 3 3 3 (498) Shd

M Rodd (7) 5 5 4 (474) Nk

CC Wong* (11) 6 7 5 (444) Ns

E Avengers 570 56.5c 56.5 (176-17)

S John (4) 4 4 7 (429) 1

TR Koh (10) 10 8 8 (437) Nk

B Thompson (7) 8 8 8 (526) Hd

R Isjugal* (2) 11 11 10 (459) 3.25

D Moor (12) 12 12 11 (459) 3.25

T See* (12) 9 9 12 (501) Hd

Winning owner: Elaine Chen. Trainer: S Gray. Time: 1min 23.71sec (good). Forecast: \$45. Tierce: \$736.

Course scratchings: 9 Mademoiselle Sapphire

RACE 6

IC51600m
Winning owner: Elaine Chen. Trainer: S Gray. Time: 1min 23.71sec (good). Forecast: \$45. Tierce: \$736.

Course scratchings: 9 Mademoiselle Sapphire

RACE 7

KS-D21200m
Winning stable: Fortuna NZ Racing. Trainer: M Walker. Time: 1min 41.94sec (good). Forecast: \$24.

Tierce: \$1129. Quartet: \$6642. P Forecast: \$11 (6-2), \$44 (2-11), \$51 (6-11). Trio: \$267.

Course scratchings: 13 Destiny Knight

RACE 8

N Juglali (5) 2 2 1 (426) -

I Amrill* (8) 1 1 2 (440) Hd

B Vorster (6) 3 3 3 (498) Shd

M Rodd (7) 5 5 4 (474) Nk

CC Wong* (11) 6 7 5 (444) Ns

E Avengers 570 56.5c 56.5 (176-17)

S John (4) 4 4 7 (429) 1

TR Koh (10) 10 8 8 (437) Nk

B Thompson (7) 8 8 8 (526) Hd

R Isjugal* (2) 11 11 10 (459) 3.25

D Moor (12) 12 12 11 (459) 3.25

T See* (12) 9 9 12 (501) Hd

Winning owner: Elaine Chen. Trainer: S Gray. Time: 1min 23.71sec (good). Forecast: \$45. Tierce: \$736.

Course scratchings: 9 Mademoiselle Sapphire

RACE 9

KS-C (LC) 1400m
Winning stable: Fortuna NZ Racing. Trainer: M Walker. Time: 1min 23.71sec (good). Forecast: \$45. Tierce: \$736.

Course scratchings: 9 Mademoiselle Sapphire

RACE 10

C4 D1 (LC) 1400m
Winning stable: MMW. Trainer: S Burdridge. Time: 1min 22.22sec (good). Forecast: \$102. Tierce: \$857.

Tierce: \$5624. P Forecast: \$29 (1-10), \$53 (10-8), \$15 (8-10). Trio: \$202.

Course scratchings: 13 Destin Knight

RACE 11

C4 D1000m
Winning stable: Gold. Trainer: C Brown. Time: 1min 10.94sec (good). Forecast: \$33. Tierce: \$368.

Tierce: \$943. P Forecast: \$9 (5-7), \$17 (7-2), \$26 (5-2). Trio: \$58.

Course scratchings: 15 Agni 16 Archie

RACE 12

C4 04:20PM (€16,000)
Winning stable: CTYA. Trainer: H Koh. Time: 1min 07.24sec (good). Forecast: \$103. Tierce: \$103.

SPORT

END OF THE ROAD FOR RIDHWAN?

Singapore's top boxer says he's retiring before his biggest bout on March 29

Shamir Osman

The biggest fight of his professional career – make that the biggest fight for any Singapore boxer – is just 2½ months away.

But Muhamad Ridhwan's World Boxing Council (WBC) silver featherweight title bout against Namibian Paulus Ambunda may not take place at all.

The 31-year-old caused a stir on social media with his Facebook post early yesterday morning, announcing his retirement.

Titled "The road has ended", it read: "Hi all. Guess what? All good things come to an end. It was fun while it lasted. This is it for me. I am

retiring."

He could not be reached for an explanation, but his promoter, Ringstar, laughed off the move, saying that the boxer will, as scheduled, travel to the Philippines for a training camp next week.

Ticket sales for the March 29 bout are scheduled to start on Monday.

Ridhwan's build-up has been less than ideal. Barely two weeks ago, The Straits Times reported that he had parted ways with his long-time trainer Rey Caftom Jr and will instead spend over two months un-

der another Filipino coach, Joven Jimenez, at the Survival Camp.

The training facility for boxers in Cavite province, about three hours' drive south of Manila, is run by International Boxing Federation super flyweight world champion Jervin Ancajas, who was dubbed "the next Manny Pacquiao" by legendary promoter Bob Arum.

Then, Ridhwan had insisted that "everybody's on track, everybody's aligned and everybody's happy".

So, yesterday's announcement left the fraternity puzzled.

"I don't follow so I don't know what exactly transpired on social media. But there have been several claims made there in the past," said Syed Abdul Kadir, the president of the Singapore Amateur Boxing Association, who is also Ridhwan's former coach.

"But Ridhwan knows what's best for him, and if it's time for him to call time on his career. We can't push him because he knows his limits, and we have to respect his wishes because it's really up to him.

"He could have won that last fight

(against Ambunda). In my experience as a boxer and a coach, I think he spent a lot of time on publicising the fight. I don't know if that meant he trained less, but full concentration on training would have been better for him."

Ridhwan lost a split decision to Ambunda in a 12-round fight for the International Boxing Organisation super bantamweight title last Sept 29. It was his first defeat in 12 pro fights.

shamiro@sph.com.sg

Singapore's Muhamad Ridhwan lost a split decision to Namibian Paulus Ambunda in a 12-round fight for the International Boxing Organisation super bantamweight title last Sept 29. They are scheduled to meet again in a World Boxing Council (WBC) silver featherweight title bout on March 29.

ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG



NO MORE FOR ME

Guess what? All good things come to an end. It was fun while it lasted. This is it for me. I am retiring.

“

MUHAMAD RIDHWAN, Singapore boxer, in a Facebook post.

HE KNOWS BEST

I don't follow so I don't know what exactly transpired on social media. But there have been several claims made there in the past. But Ridhwan knows what's best for him, and if it's time for him to call time on his career.

“

SYED ABDUL KADIR, president of the Singapore Amateur Boxing Association, and Ridhwan's former coach, reacting to the news.

Enduring the heat of competition

Nicole Chia

Low temperatures, strong winds, rain and sometimes even snow are typical weather conditions in Britain at this time of the year.

But for three hours each week, Jonathan Brownlee works out on an exercise bike and a treadmill in a room that can be heated up to 35 deg C in his Yorkshire home.

The 2012 world champion is training for the final leg of the Super League Triathlon's debut season – in Singapore at One15 Marina on Sentosa on Feb 23-24.

"I'm not very good in the heat, as people have seen before," said Brownlee, who had succumbed to the heat during a 2016 race in Mexico and was helped over the finish line by his older brother Alistair.

Describing how he converted a room in his house into a heat cham-



ber by installing a heater, he added: "Hopefully by the time I get to Singapore, I'll be ready for the heat."

The 28-year-old, a medallist at the last two Olympics (bronze in 2012 and silver in 2016), was speaking to Singapore media yesterday in a conference call from Spain where he is training.

He reiterated that the series is "super challenging", having said previously that the opener in Jersey had taken "quite a lot out of me".

"For Jersey, for the whole Super League, the hardest day was the enduro format, which is going to be placed in Singapore as well," he said.

"If you've any weakness, you get found out. It happens on a Sunday so you've already raced the day before. It's really hard racing."

The enduro features three continuous rounds, each comprising a

300m swim, a 5km bike ride and a

1.6km run. The two slowest athletes at the end of each discipline will be eliminated.

Brownlee will be in Spain until Jan 21 before going home. He will then go to Thailand for 10 days to acclimatise to the tropical weather.

He aims to win in Singapore and also hopes to finish on the podium in the overall series rankings.

This outcome would be "perfect"

Top triathlete Jonathan Brownlee will be in Singapore for the Feb 23-24 Super League Triathlon finale. He is aiming for a win which would also help him to finish on the podium in the overall series ranking.
PHOTO: SUPER LEAGUE TRIATHLON

after an injury-plagued year.

"For me to win the series is very difficult now," he admitted. "I'm looking forward to racing well more than anything."

"I didn't have my best season last year... I'm looking forward to racing well on the start line in Singapore excited, healthy and ready to race."

cnicole@sph.com.sg

Ariya and Park spearhead world-class Sentosa field

The HSBC Women's World Championship will once again showcase the best in golf this year, with the world's top 20 all pencilled in for the Feb 28-March 3 Singapore tournament.

Ariya Jutanugarn, who won the US Women's Open last June after a dramatic play-off for the second Major of her career, headlines one of the strongest fields in the US\$1.5 million (\$2 million) event's 12-year history.

She will be joined by the player she displaced at the top of the rankings, Park Sung-hyun, who was No. 1 between August and October on the back of three wins.

Defending champion Michelle Wie will also return to the Sentosa Golf Club's New Tanjong Course, after announcing last week that her recovery from wrist surgery had gone smoothly.

Crowd favourite Lexi Thompson, who ended a 14-month title drought at the season-ending Tour

Championship last November, will be eyeing an early win to extend her streak of six straight years with an LPGA title.

Fans will also get to see several former No. 1s in action – seven-time Major champion Park In-bee, China's Feng Shanshan, and New Zealand's Lydia Ko.

Minjee Lee is hoping to improve on her sixth placing, her best performance at the event.

Said the Australian world No. 6, who had 13 top-10 finishes last year: "2018 was an absolutely incredible journey for me and I managed to get off to a flying start."

"Fingers crossed, I'm able to kick-start the 2019 season well and bring that form to the HSBC Women's World Championship, to match up against the very best."

Lester Wong

• For more information and tickets: www.hsgolf.com/womens

Next 48 Hours

TODAY

FOOTBALL

AFC Asian Cup Gp D: Vietnam v Iran (6.50pm), Yemen v Iraq (9.20pm). Gp E: Lebanon v Saudi Arabia (11.15pm) – Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208. English Premier League West Ham v Arsenal (8.30pm). Brighton v

Liverpool (11pm), Chelsea v Newcastle (tomorrow, 1.30am) – Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227. Leicester v Southampton (Ch103 & Ch228), Crystal Palace v Watford (Ch104 & Ch229), Cardiff v Huddersfield (Ch105 & Ch230), Burnley v Fulham (Ch106 & Ch231) – 10.50pm.

Spanish LaLiga Leganes v Huesca

(7.55pm), Valencia v Valladolid (11.10pm), Girona v Alaves (tomorrow, 1.25am), Villarreal v Getafe (tomorrow, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213.

ATP/WTA Sydney International: Finals (Singtel TV Ch115 & StarHub Ch209, 4pm).

TOMORROW

BASKETBALL

ABL Formosa Dreamers v Alab Pilipinas: (StarHub Ch201, 3pm), Spore Slingers v Mono Vampire (OCBC Arena, 4pm), Saigon Heat v HK Eastern (6pm), CLS Knights Indonesia v Macau Black Bears (8pm) – Ch202.

FOOTBALL

AFC Asian Cup Gp E: North Korea v Qatar (6.50pm). Gp F: Oman v Japan (9.20pm), Turkmenistan v Uzbekistan (11.50pm) – Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208.

English Premier League Everton v Bournemouth (10.15pm), Tottenham v Man United (Monday, 12.30am) –

Singtel TV Ch102 & StarHub Ch227.

Spanish LaLiga Atletico v Levante (6.55pm), Bilbao v Sevilla (11.10pm), Barcelona v Eibar (Monday, 1.25am), Betis v Real Madrid (Monday, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213.

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“What,
no rubbish
on the
ground?”

Actress Lucy Liu tells **Olivia Ho** why she cannot include Singapore in her artwork, now on show at the National Museum.

D6&7

Lucy Liu's Lost And Found is part of Unhomed Belongings, a joint exhibition with Singaporean artist Shubigi Rao at the National Museum of Singapore.

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Furniture company co-founder Jefery Kurniadidjaja does not believe in having the ‘perfect’ house, but one that embraces the owner’s lifestyle and taste

Eliza Hamizah

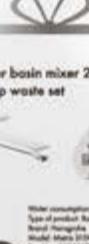
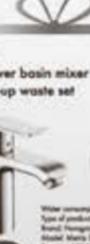
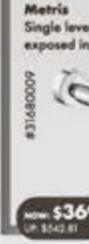
Mr Jefery Kurniadidjaja is the co-founder of a home-grown furniture company, but he does not believe in making his home showroom-standard.

"A home is not a showroom. We collect furniture we love – not necessarily iconic designs – and just mix and match them. It is what gives character to the space," he

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Metropol Single lever basin mixer 260 with lever handle & push-open waste set  #32251009 Water consumption: 4.70 l/min. Type of product: Basin Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 32251009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$579 U.P. \$887.99	Metropol Single lever basin mixer 110 with lever handle & push-open waste set  #32250009 Water consumption: 4.70 l/min. Type of product: Basin Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 32250009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$419 U.P. \$616.64	Metropol Single lever basin mixer 110 with loop handle & push-open waste set  #74506009 Water consumption: 4.80 l/min. Type of product: Basin Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 74506009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$449 U.P. \$678.27	Metropol Single lever basin mixer 100 with loop handle & push-open waste set  #74505009 Water consumption: 4.80 l/min. Type of product: Basin Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 74505009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$429 U.P. \$641.25
Metrис Single lever bath mixer for exposed installation  #31480009 Water consumption: 8.30 l/min. Type of product: Bath Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metris Exposed Bath Mixer 31480009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$469 U.P. \$731.19	Metrис Single lever shower mixer for exposed installation  #31480009 Water consumption: 8.10 l/min. Type of product: Shower Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metris Exposed Shower Mixer 31480009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$369 U.P. \$545.81	Metropol Single lever bath mixer with loop handle for exposed installation  #74540009 Water consumption: 7.00 l/min. Type of product: Bath Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 74540009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$549 U.P. \$813.05	Metropol Single lever shower mixer with loop handle for exposed installation  #74550009 Water consumption: 7.00 l/min. Type of product: Shower Tap and Waste Brand: Hansgrohe Model: Metropol 74550009 Reg. No.: 8072010/033249 Now: \$389 U.P. \$567.31

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NOTICES

Add warmth with wood

Natural materials like stone and wood also give texture and definition, say interior designers

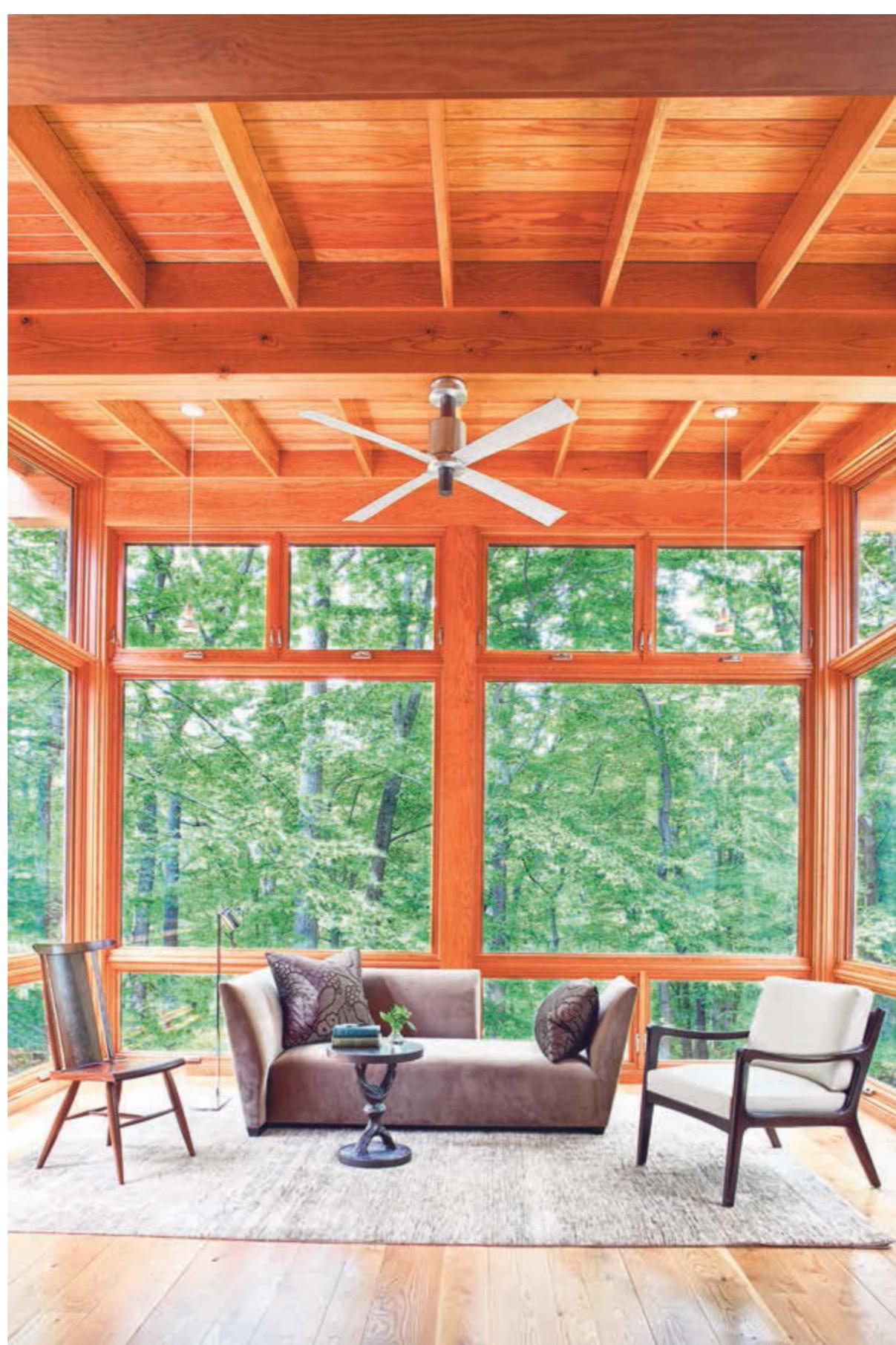
WASHINGTON • When Jim and Jennifer Sergent bought their home in suburban Arlington, Virginia, two years ago, they appreciated its modern look. But the master bathroom left a lot to be desired, said Mr Sergent, a graphics editor.

Said Mrs Sergent, a freelance design writer: "It was Jim's idea to build a shower with a natural stone wall that echoes the fireplace. We know design fashions come and go, but stone and wood will never go away."

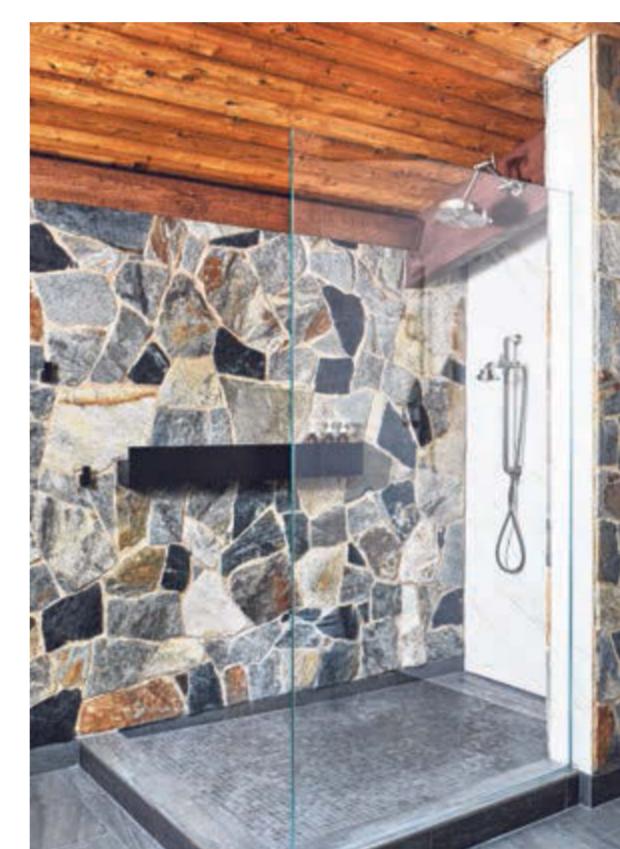
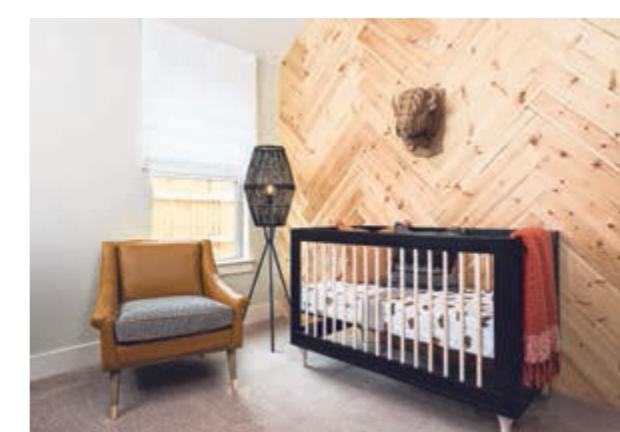
The instinct to bring natural elements into their bathroom is reflected in a growing trend among home owners to incorporate more wood and stone into their interior spaces, sometimes in unexpected places.

"It makes people feel good when we bring in natural elements," said Ms Leigh Spicher, director of design studios for Ashton Woods, an Atlanta-based builder.

"Using wood on walls or the ceiling of a bathroom fits in with the trend towards using wood for trim



A room with a high ceiling can seem cold. But wood can be used to warm it up. PHOTOS: ASHTON WOODS, RILL ARCHITECTS, WASHINGTON POST



materials in contrast with their surroundings.

"In an urban environment, it's almost more necessary to bring in wood and stone, so it's not a cold interior regardless of the setting," Ms Parker said.

At a contemporary-style home in Washington, she added a large wooden front door.

"The house has stone on the exterior and, inside, it's very crisp and contemporary, with high ceilings," she said.

"The wooden door adds a lot of warmth and is welcoming when you make the transition from the stone exterior to the contemporary interior."

Similarly, she added a beamed ceiling and natural oak floors to a sleek all-white kitchen in a new home in Arlington to add texture and colour to the space.

The fact that natural stone is used for home exteriors and patios signals that it is durable for indoor use as well. But it is best to avoid it in kitchen areas, where it could be susceptible to stains.

"Stone can be heavier and costlier to install because of the added weight, but people are often willing to spend the money because they love it," Ms Spicher said.

Wood and stone can cost more than some other materials.

Adding a wooden ceiling to a room can cost US\$5,000 (\$6,800) to US\$10,000, Mr Rill said.

If you are installing wood in a damp room such as a bathroom, pressure-treated poplar is a good choice because it is more resistant to mould, Ms Spicher said.

"It's also smart to install a backsplash between the sink and wood to protect the wood from getting too wet." WASHINGTON POST

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Root Awakening

**Cockscomb flower produces seeds after flowering**

What is the name of this flower (above)? How do I collect the seeds for germination?

Hassan Ali

The plant is commonly called the cockscomb flower due to its crested portion of the inflorescence resembling a rooster's comb. It is a festive plant for Chinese New Year and its botanical name is Celosia cristata.

The plant behaves like an annual, which means it declines after flow-

ering and producing seeds. The seeds are small and black and they can be collected from a faded inflorescence.

Cut the faded inflorescence and hang it upside-down to dry. Seeds can be harvested by rubbing them off the portion found just below the crested flower head.

Aloe vera has fungal disease

Why does my aloe vera plant (right), which is placed in the corridor, have black spots?

Rosalind Soh

Your aloe vera plant is likely not receiving sufficient sunlight for growth and the root zone may be too wet. Together, such conditions can make your plant more prone to getting fungal leaf spots.

Infected leaves will not revert to normal and if conditions do not improve, fungicides are of little help to improve the situation.

This sun-loving plant needs to be grown under at least six hours of direct sunlight to thrive. Plants grown under direct sunlight produce short, thick and stiff leaves that are more resistant to fungal disease.

When the plant gets optimal sunlight intensity, the issue will usually



resolve on its own – new leaves that are produced will be fungal spot-free. Shelter the plant from rain during the rainy season.

Also, ensure the soil used to grow your plant has coarse gritty material which will permit fast drainage of water and good aeration of the roots.

- Answers by Dr Wilson Wong, an NParks-certified practising horticulturist and park manager. He is the founder of Green Culture Singapore and an adjunct assistant professor (Food Science & Technology) at the National University of Singapore.

- Have a gardening query? E-mail it with clear, high-resolution pictures of at least 1MB, if any, and your full name to stlife@sph.com.sg

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PHOTOS: BETTY HO, ELLEN HO, HASSAN ALI, ROSALIND SOH

Ceylon spinach has fungal leaf spots

I have two species of edible vegetables which grew quite well. Over the months, however, red spots were seen on the leaves (left) and stems. Are the leaves still edible? What is the reason for the red spots? Also, what are the names of these vegetables?

Ellen Ho

Your Ceylon spinach plants (*Basella rubra* with red leaf stalks

and stems; *Basella alba* for the all-green plant) are infected by a fungal disease.

As the plants are grown for consumption, it is not recommended you use chemical fungicides that are generally more effective.

As such, remove all infected leaves and discard them with household trash to reduce the spread of the disease.

To promote healthy plants that are less prone to the disease, grow them in a sunny location with good air circulation.

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More talk of Fan returning to work

SHANGHAI • First, Fan Bingbing caught the attention of sharp-eyed netizens when photographs of the actress endorsing an eyewear brand popped up early this week.

Now, talk that the 37-year-old – who fell from grace after she was mired in a tax scandal last year – is setting sights on a comeback has gained further credence.

Fashion magazine Marie Claire reported that actress Penelope Cruz is preparing for an all-female spy thriller called 355, with Jessica Chastain, Lupita Nyong'o and Fan co-starring.

Last September, the Global Times reported that Zhang Ziyi's representative had quashed talk that the actress would replace Fan in that movie.

Some netizens believe that Fan stands a better chance to revive her career in Hollywood for now, as not everyone in China is happy that she escaped a jail term over her tax evasion.

Still, even though she was fined 883 million yuan (\$8177 million) in October, she was listed by The Beijing News on Monday as one of the Entertainers of 2018.

This despite her being out of the public eye for several months after television presenter Cui Yongyuan said in May that she had inked two contracts for her role in movie Air Strike, with the one with a lower amount to be submitted for tax reporting.

As rumours swirled over her fate then, veteran actor Jackie Chan had to deny reports that she had asked him for help to seek refuge in the United States.

But photos showing Fan promoting Chinese sunglasses brand Prsr on Sina Weibo this week suggest that advertisers are now willing – or could have received tacit approval from the authorities – to take a chance on her again.

"The newly released photos are for the company's 2019 series of sunglasses," a staff member of the Prsr online store told the Global Times.

"The photos featuring Fan were newly uploaded."

On social media



PHOTO: JAMIE LEE CURTIS/INSTAGRAM

STALKED ON THE RED CARPET: Halloween star Jamie Lee Curtis was "stalked" at the recent Golden Globes red carpet. Tweeting about her self-defence response, she wrote: "I specifically moved away from the blatant promotions by Fiji and

Moet where young women with their trays filled with their wares stood near a designated camera.

"I knew why there was a photographer poised there and I moved away as I said out loud that I didn't want to be doing

advertising for either." Referring to a photo that was snapped, she added: "Clearly, this angle shows that I moved from her being behind me and yet from the side it still happens." She was not the only celebrity targeted as the Fiji Water Girl

was also seen in almost every other star's photo.

Curtis, who wants a peaceful resolution, said: "The sponsors of events need to get permission from people when they get them to take their picture next to products."

Lady Gaga says sorry for working with R. Kelly



NEW YORK • Pop diva Lady Gaga (left) apologised on Thursday for a 2013 collaboration with R&B star R. Kelly (below left), who has been accused of having sex with children.

"I'm sorry, both for my poor judgment when I was young, and for not speaking out sooner," she tweeted.

"I intend to remove this song Do What U Want (With My Body) from iTunes and other streaming platforms and will not be working with him again."

Her apology comes amid renewed attention on allegations of sexual misconduct against Kelly, which were highlighted in a six-hour documentary series.

In the Lifetime cable network show Surviving R. Kelly which premiered this month, backup singers alleged sexual relations between him and three girls under age 16, including 15-year-old star Aaliyah, who died in 2001 in a plane crash.

Meanwhile, Beyoncé's father Mathew Knowles has revealed how the family made sure that the singer and her then Destiny's Child bandmates were not harmed when they met Kelly in 1998 to explore a tie-up.

Speaking to Metro.co.uk, he said: "When they went to the bathroom, (his then wife) Tina would go with them. They did not leave our eyes."

New Tintin film, book in the works

PARIS • Tintin turned 90 last Thursday, but the boy hero is not retiring his zest for adventure.

Casterman, which publishes his comic-book exploits, said a film featuring the cub reporter by director Peter Jackson is in the pipeline.

Steven Spielberg, who made Tintin's first Hollywood outing in 2011's The Adventures Of Tintin: The Secret Of The Unicorn, is producing this time.

A new Tintin book is also in the works.

Jackson has been tight-lipped on what adventure or adventures he would draw on for the film.

"There are so many good stories and I just want to see what I feel like making. There are so many choices and I couldn't tell you today which way I'm going," he added.

The first Tintin cartoons appeared in Belgian Catholic journal Le Petit Vingtième on Jan 10, 1929.

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Comics

BABY BLUES



GARFIELD



Free to air

CHANNEL 5

AM
6.00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 15 (HD) (PG) (V)
7.00 The Dr Oz Show 8 (HD) (IE)
8.00 On The Red Dot - Old Enough! (CA)
8.30 Wheel Of Fortune 35 (HD) (V)
9.30 Secret Meat Business (IE)
10.00 Euromaxx (PG) (Cul)
10.30 Arts 21 (Cul)
11.00 Worst Cooks In America 6 (HD) (PG) (IE)
PM
12.00 Everyday Gourmet 3 (HD) (IE)
12.30 Films & Stars (PG) (V)
1.00 America's Got Talent 12 (HD) (PG) (V)
3.00 In My Backyard (HD) (V)
4.00 Revolution (HD) (PG) (V)
5.00 Designer In The House 2 (HD) (V)
5.30 Divided (US) (HD) (PG) (V)
6.00 Hungry For Love (HD) (V)
6.30 Just For Laughs Gags 18 (HD) (V)
6.45 Cine On 5: The Maze Runner (HD) (PG) (CC) (M)
9.00 News Tonight (HD)
9.30 The Strangest Weather On Earth 2 (HD) (CC) (IE)
10.00 Scary Scary Saturday: Haunter (PG13) (M) (Premiere)
AM
12.00 The Shannara Chronicles (PG13) (D)
1.40 Grimm 5 (HD) (PG13) (D)
2.30 Timeless (HD) (PG) (D)
3.20 Worst Cooks In America 6 (HD) (PG) (IE)
4.20 Wheel Of Fortune 35 (HD) (V)
5.10 The Dr Oz Show 8 (HD) (IE)

CHANNEL 8

AM
6.00 Neighbourhood Chef 2 (HD) (V)
7.00 Portrait Of Home (D)
9.00 DreamCorps (HD) (S)
9.30 Fierrobo (S)
10.00 The Adv Of Little Carp (S)
10.30 All New Jackie Chan Adventures (S)
11.00 The Love 97.2 Breakfast Quartet 2 (CC) (V)
PM
12.00 Foodie Sunday (V)
1.00 Golden Age Talentime (HD) (CC) (V)
2.00 Challenge The Impossible 2 (HD) (V)
4.00 My Star Guide 13 (HD) (V)

4.30 Beyond Words (PG) (CC) (D)
6.30 Singapore Today (HD) (News)
7.00 Spring Flower (PG) (D)
9.00 The Sheng Siong Show 24 (V) (Live)
10.00 News Tonight (HD)
10.30 Saturday Cinema: Horseplay (PG) (CC) (M)
AM
12.30 My Amazing Bride (PG) (CC) (D)
2.30 Behind Every Job (IE)
3.30 The Ten Deadly Sins (PG13) (D)
4.00 The Deer And The Cauldron (HD) (PG) (D)

CHANNEL U

AM
10.00 Fantastic Baby 2 (V)
11.30 Shoot It 2 (IE)
PM
12.30 Blue Tick (PG) (CC) (D)
1.30 World Food (CC) (IE)
2.30 Artistic Journeys (IE)
3.00 Golden Rainbow (PG) (CC) (D)
5.00 Lady With Class (PG) (CC) (D)
7.00 Puzzle Masters (V)
9.00 Jealousy Incarnate (PG) (CC) (D)
11.00 News Tonight
11.30 Puzzle Masters (V)
AM
1.30 Lord Of Shanghai (PG) (CC) (D)
2.30 Close

CNA

AM
6.00 Singapore Tonight
7.00 News Now
7.30 Correspondents' Diary
8.00 News Now
8.30 Welcome 2 Taiwan: Taiwan Holiday
9.00 News Now
9.30 Asia Business First Weekend
10.20 Insight
11.00 News Now
11.30 Conversation With
PM
12.00 News Now
12.30 Asia Business First Weekend
1.02 Conversation With
1.30 Super Octogenarians
2.00 News Now
2.30 Welcome 2 Taiwan: Taiwan Holiday (English Subtitles)
3.00 News Now
3.30 Asia Business First Weekend
4.02 Insight
5.00 News Now

5.30 Edible Wild
6.00 News Now
6.30 Made In Singapore
7.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)
8.00 Primetime Asia
8.30 Correspondents' Diary
9.02 Enemy Within (CC)

10.00 Singapore Tonight
10.30 Money Mind
11.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)

AM

12.00 News Now
12.30 Conversation With
1.02 Correspondents' Diary
1.30 Money Mind
2.00 News Now
2.30 Asia Business First Weekend
3.02 Insight
4.00 News Now
4.30 Money Mind
5.02 Enemy Within

Programmes may be pre-empted by breaking news

VASANTHAM

PM
1.00 Vasantha Gold: Kadavu Vaangi Kalyaanam (PG) (M)
4.00 Bollywood Masti: Force 2 (PG) (Hindi) (M)
7.00 Thirai Express (HD) (CC) (V)
8.00 Vera Level (HD) (CC) (IE)
8.30 Tamil Seithi (News) (R)

12.30 Close

OKTO

AM
7.00 Sid The Science Kid (P)
8.00 Elias: Rescue Team Adventures (HD) (P)
8.30 Super Wings (HD) (P)
9.00 Robocar Poli Fire Safety (S)
9.30 Metalions (S)
10.00 Pokemon The Series: Sun And Moon (HD) (S)
10.30 Smurfs (HD) (S)
11.00 Lego Ninjago - Sons Of Garmadon (HD) (S)
11.30 Sindbad & The 7 Galaxies (S)
PM
12.00 Totally Totto (HD) (S)

12.30 Fableicious (HD) (S)
1.00 Blazing Team: Masters Of Yo Kwon Do (HD) (S)
1.30 Nature Cat (HD) (S)

2.00 Zorro The Chronicles (HD) (S)
2.30 The Deep (HD) (S)
3.00 Future Card Buddyfight X (HD) (PG) (S)

3.30 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (S)

4.00 Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (PG) (CC) (S)

4.30 Blazing Team: Masters Of Yo Kwon Do (HD) (S)
5.00 Nature Cat (HD) (S)

5.30 Zorro The Chronicles (HD) (S)

6.00 Word Whiz Or Slime Pit (S)

6.30 Don't Try This At Home (HD) (S)

7.00 The Deep (HD) (CC) (S)

7.30 Future Card Buddyfight X (HD) (CC) (S)

8.00 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (CC) (S)

8.30 Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (PG) (CC) (S)

9.00 Sportsmax (HD) (Sports)

9.30 Whacked Out Sports (PG) (V)

10.00 ONE Championship 2018/19: Warriors Of The World (Bangkok) (PG13) (Sports)

AM
12.55 Close

SURIA

PM
3.00 Ceria Popstar (HD) (V)
4.00 Fatonah Azali (PG) (CC) (Telemovie)
6.00 Tahu Nahu (S)

6.30 Jenayah Tersembuni (PG) (CC) (IE)

7.00 Ibu Tumpang (IE)

8.00 Berita (HD) (News)

8.30 Sepatu Reunion Live 2 (HD) (CC) (V)

9.30 Setia Menunggu (PG) (CC) (D)

10.30 Extreme Roadtrip (IE)

11.00 Detik (PG) (CA)

11.30 Berita (HD) (News) (R)

AM
12.00 Close

C: Children; CA: Current Affairs;
CC: Closed Captions; Cul: Culture;
D: Drama; IE: Info-Ed; M: Movies;
P: Preschool; PG: Parental Guidance;
R: Repeat; S: Schoolkids; SC: Sitcom;
V: Variety

Programme schedules correct at time of printing. Telecast details from Mediacorp, StarHub and Singtel TV. For pay TV updates, go to www.starhub.com/tv or www.singteltv.com.sg

The Stars Say

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Get started on something new - you know what you want and exactly how to get there.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Even if you find the best deal imaginable, you may want to wait before spending any money.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Someone whom you do not see every day, but know well enough, is vital to your success.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

When things get weird, your first impulse may be to lash out. Try not to take things personally.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22)

You are having too much fun to worry about whether or not you are learning anything.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)

Your energy is right for committing yourself to new projects or finding new meaning in old ones.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

Your love life can run on autopilot for the time being - focus your social energy on other people.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Take things one step at a time. If you get too far ahead of yourself, you will have to redo your hard work.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Hang out with younger relatives or friends' kids. Your energy is right for getting along with them.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Something has got to end and you need to be the one to end it soon.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

Try out a new, big-picture idea - things can be a lot better if you are willing to take a risk.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)

Your communication style is out of sync with the rest of the world, but that does not mean you are out of touch.

• Provided by Astrology.com (www.astrology.com)

StarHub TV

HISTORY (CHANNEL 401)

AM
6.00 Neighbourhood Chef 2 (HD) (V)
7.00 Portrait Of Home (D)
9.00 DreamCorps (HD) (S)
9.30 Fierrobo (S)
10.00 The Adv Of Little Carp (S)
10.30 All New Jackie Chan Adventures (S)
11.00 The Love 97.2 Breakfast Quartet 2 (CC) (V)
PM
12.00 Foodie Sunday (V)
1.00 Golden Age Talentime (HD) (CC) (V)
2.00 Challenge The Impossible 2 (HD) (V)
4.00 My Star Guide 13 (HD) (V)

HUB CITY (CHANNEL 825)

AM
9.00 The King's Woman (HD)
PM
12.00 Hot Door Night 15 (HD)
1.00 Mr Player 7 (HD)

3.00 Unlimited Song Season (HD)
4.30 Travel Together 2 (HD)
5.00 Viva La Romance (HD)
7.00 Perfect Match 6 (HD)
8.45 Return (HD)

HUB SPORTS 1 (CHANNEL 201)

PM
12.30 Tennis: Deuce 2018
1.00 UCI BMX Supercross World Cup Round 8 Highlights: Argentina
1.30 UCI BMX Supercross World Cup Round 13: Adelaide 36ers Vs Brisbane
2.00 BMX Supercross 2017: Lane 1
2.30 Tennis: ATP 1000 Nitto ATP Finals Day 6 Session 1
4.30 Tennis: ATP 1000 Nitto ATP Finals Day 8 Session 2
6.30 Cycling: Tour Of Hainan 2018 Highlights
7.30 BMX: Living The Ride
8.00 Cycling: Saitama Criterion By Le Tour De France Highlights
9.00 Extreme Sports: World Surf League 2018: Women's Hawaiian Pro Highlights
10.00 Mountain Bike: Enduro World Series 2018: Whistler Highlights
10.30 BMX Supercross 2017: Lane 1
11.00 Football: EFL Championships 2018 Matchday 27: Wigan Athletic Vs Aston Villa
AM
1.25 Football: EFL Championships 2018 Matchday 27: Millwall Vs Blackburn Rovers

HUB SPORTS 2 (CHANNEL 202)

AM
11.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
11.30 National Basketball League Round 13: Adelaide 36ers Vs Brisbane Bullets (Live)
PM
1.30 Fiba World Basketball 2.00 ASEAN Basketball League: Zhuhai Wolf Warriors Vs Singapore Slingers 4.00 Magazine: Spartan Barcelona 2018 4.30 Wrestling: WWE Bottomline (PG)
5.30 Football: EFL Championships 2018 Matchday 27: Leeds United Vs Derby County
7.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV 8.00 Wrestling: WWE Afterburn (PG)
9.00 Football: The EFL Highlights 9.30 Fiba World Basketball 9.55 Football: Coppa Italia Round Of 16: Lazio Vs Novara (Live)
AM
12.00 The Football Review 12.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV 12.55 Football: Coppa Italia Round Of 16: Sampdoria Vs Milan (Live)
3.00 Magazine: Spartan Barcelona 3.30 The Football Review 3.40 Football: Coppa Italia Round Of 16: Bologna Vs Juventus (Live)
4.45 Angel Rodriguez

Singtel TV

CARTOON NETWORK (CHANNEL 226)

AM
6.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
7.00 The Tom And Jerry Show
8.00 Teen Titans Go!
9.00 We Bare Bears
9.30 Craig Of The Creek
10.30 The Powerpuff Girls
11.00 OK K.O! Let's Be Heroes
11.30 Ben 10

PM

12.00 Unikitty
12.30 The Amazing World Of Gumball
1.00 Craig Of The Creek
1.30 Running Man Animation
2.00 We Bare Bears
2.30 The Powerpuff Girls
3.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
3.30 Supernobobs
4.00 Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders Of Berk
5.00 Teen Titans Go!

5.30 Ben 10

7.00 Craig Of The Creek

8.00 Running Man Animation

9.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches

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RO Daybed (Leather) by Scanliving 1810 * 940 * 970 mm Valid till 18 Jan 2019	GREI Coffee Table 950 * 950 * 450 mm Valid till 18 Jan 2019
STADA Phone Table 400 * 350 * 800 mm Valid till 18 Jan 2019	FRED 1.5m TV Sideboard 1500 * 375 * 360 mm Valid till 18 Jan 2019

*Terms & Conditions: Offers are valid from 12 Jan to 18 Jan 2019 exclusively at Scanteak, while stocks last. Only original coupons will be accepted. Coupons are not valid with any other discounts, promotions, gift cards and privileges or in-house / loyalty programmes. Limited to 1 redemption per coupon per person. Please refer to individual coupons for specific terms and conditions. Images are for illustration purposes only. Information stated is correct at time of print and is subject to change without prior notice.

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*While stocks last, terms and conditions apply. Mattresses sold separately. Delivery charges apply. Prices are correct at the time of print. Images for illustration only. Not all items available for cash & carry. Not all promotions available at all showrooms. Early Bird Special, Free Gong Cha and Warehouse Exclusive items are only available at Scanteak Trade Showroom.

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Show stoppers

New cars are among the highlights of the 2019 Singapore Motorshow

Christopher Tan
Senior Correspondent

High-voltage and high-octane models hog the limelight at the Singapore Motorshow, which is on until tomorrow.

In all, 140 cars are on display, with 25 of them being launched officially or shown for the first time here. Here are some highlights.

christan@sph.com.sg

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WHERE: Levels 3 and 4 Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Raffles Boulevard

WHEN: Today, 10.30am to 10pm; tomorrow, 10.30am to 8pm

ADMISSION: \$6; children below 1.2m enter free; separate tickets required for stunt driver Russ Swift's show

INFO: www.motorshow.com.sg/
2019

INFINITI QX50
Few carmakers work on new engines these days. Nissan's Infiniti is one. Its QX50 (right, with actress Zoe Tay) boasts the world's first production variable compression ratio turbo engine. The 2-litre continually adjusts its compression ratio to optimise efficiency. It combines the power of a petrol engine with the torque and efficiency of a diesel engine.

AUDI Q3

Making its Asian debut here is Audi's compact crossover, now sportier, smarter and sharper than ever. The second-generation Q3 is also a five-star scorer at the European New Car Assessment Programme crash tests.



MAZDA 3
The current Mazda 3 is already a sleek number, but the new one (right) is even sleeker. Variants arriving include a mild hybrid and a variable compression model.



BMW 3-SERIES
The 3-series (right) has always been BMW's ultimate driving machine. The latest one packs a host of innovative features, including the ability to retrace its path backwards for 50m.



BMW X5
This family sport utility vehicle debuts as a five-seater, with a seven-seater due shortly. A new design hides its bulk cleverly.



PEUGEOT 508

Peugeot never lets you down in the design department and the new 508 (above) is proof yet again. The latest car looks sportier and has a sumptuous interior.

LEXUS UX

Lexus' foray into the mass-premium crossover segment looks yummy inside and out.



ALPINE A110

With 250 horses hauling a body weighing just a little over a tonne, the Alpine A110 (left) - a Porsche Cayman competitor - hits 100kmh in 4.5 seconds. It marks the first appearance of the Alpine brand here in decades.



SUZUKI'S-CROSS

This biggish crossover (above) is powered by a 1-litre turbo engine behind a grille never seen on a Suzuki before.

ST PHOTOS: KUA CHEE SIONG

MORE STORIES
ON D14

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Volkswagen

Combined driving cycle: Beetle Cabriolet: 1.2 (5.6 L/100km, B), Golf 1.4 A Comfortline (5.5 L/100km, B), New Polo Comfortline 1.0 (6.9 L/100km, B), New Golf SV 1.6 (5.5 L/100km, B), New Golf Variant 1.4 (5.5 L/100km, B), Tiguan 2.0 R-Line Black Edition (8.0 L/100km, C1), Sharan 2.0 (7.3 L/100km, C1), Passat 1.8 TSI (100km, B), Arteon 2.0 TSI (100km, C2). CO₂ emissions: Beetle Cabriolet: 1.2 (129 g/km), Golf 1.4 Comfortline (125 g/km), New Polo Comfortline 1.0 (112 g/km), New Golf SV 1.6 (125 g/km), New Golf Variant 1.4 (125 g/km), Tiguan 2.0 R-Line Black Edition (183 g/km), Sharan 2.0 (168 g/km), Passat 1.8 (135 g/km), Arteon 2.0 (164 g/km). *Terms and conditions apply. Actual specifications may differ from models shown. Prices and promotions valid till 13 January 2019.

MEET THE DARK KNIGHTS

Witness the arrival of the **SPECIAL BLACK EDITION** Eclipse Cross and Outlander at the Singapore Motorshow!

ASX STYLISH URBAN SUV FROM \$89,999

OUTLANDER 7-SEATER FAMILY SUV FROM \$99,999

ATTRAGE ECO-FRIENDLY SEDAN (20.4km/l) FROM \$58,999

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VES BANDING: A2 (Attrage), B (Eclipse Cross, Outlander 2.0), C1 (ASX).

TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY. SPECIFICATIONS MAY VARY.

cyclegcarriage.com/120

From D13

**TOYOTA CAMRY**

Toyota has attempted to make the Camry (above) less "uncle" and more hip. This eighth-generation executive sedan is said to have a lower centre of gravity and a tauter chassis to enhance handling. It is available as a 2 or 2.5-litre, with a hybrid expected later.

PORSCHE MACAN

This is the latest Porsche (right) to sport full-length tail-lamps that are now common among Porsche and Audi cars. Inside, you get a bigger 10.9-inch infotainment screen.

TOYOTA RAV4

Joseph Schooling's new ride is a handsome crossover which has as much presence as a Harrier, and is far less fussy than the CH-R.

**VOLVO S60**

It looks exactly like a smaller version of the new S90 flagship sedan, which is a very good thing indeed. But with its more compact footprint, expect more dynamism on the road too.

SUBARU FORESTER E-BOXER

With a small battery pack you can see in the boot powering a motor incorporated into its symmetrical all-wheel drivetrain, the Forester e-Boxer brings Subaru into the 21st century.

RANGE ROVER SPORT PLUG-IN HYBRID

A big and hefty sport utility vehicle can always benefit from power via a wall socket. This car offers Range Rover fans the chance to do so.

RANGE ROVER EVOQUE

The second iteration of the world's favourite Range Rover makes its Asian debut here. Expect minor styling tweaks and a host of new tech features.

**HYUNDAI KONA ELECTRIC**

The fact that private-hire operator Grab ordered 200 units says plenty about this new electric car.

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Besides an infotainment touchscreen that has Apple and Android interfaces, Hyundai's Avante sports a sharp look, with features such as slim all-LED headlights.

ST PHOTOS:
ONG WEE JIN

SPECS/HYUNDAI AVANTE 1.6 (ELITE)

Price: \$86,999 with certificate of entitlement

Engine: 1.59cc 16-valve inline-4

Power: 126bhp at 6,300rpm

Torque: 155Nm at 4,850rpm

Transmission: Six-speed automatic with manual select

0-100kmh: 11.6 seconds

Top speed: 195kmh

Fuel consumption: 6.7litres/100km

Agent: Komoco Motors

Appealing family sedan

Christopher Tan
Senior Correspondent

In this day and age, a sedan is a novelty. And a budget-friendly family sedan which is not a yawn to look at nor to drive is an even bigger novelty.

Hyundai's Avante is one such sedan. Despite its age, it manages to stand out in a rising tide of sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and crossovers.

The car was previously known as the Elantra. The sixth-generation Elantra was launched here three

years ago. This latest Avante is a facelift of that car.

Mechanically, there is no material change in the Avante. Hyundai says the 1.6-litre inline-four engine and six-speed auto box are better paired to offer a smoother progress.

At the wheel, this is not apparent. The original car was competent in this area and the facelifted version remains very much so.

While an output of 126bhp and 155Nm is relatively modest, the Hyundai is not averse to higher revs, which are often required for it to keep pace with faster traffic.

Even when nearing 5,000rpm, the Avante remains unusually calm for a 1.6-litre mass-market model. The inevitable rise in decibels aside, that is. Its only drawback is a higher-than-expected fuel consumption of close to 12 litres for 100km – much higher than its stated 6.7 litres for 100km.

Its chassis is still fairly impressive despite the passing of years. It has a settled feel usually associated with Continental premium makes, but could do with slightly better body roll mitigation.

What is apparent, though, is how visually different the car is.

Hyundai has made enough cosmetic changes to qualify the car as an all-new model.

It sports a sharper and more modern front section, with slim all-LED headlights (Elite variant), a more prominent grille set in a folded bumper assembly housing triangular turning lamps placed like foglamps.

The rear is tweaked too, with a jazzed-up tail-lamp design that completes the contemporary transformation.

The modifications have made the car slightly longer. At 4,620mm, it is just 10mm shorter than the Honda Civic now.

Its wheelbase remains unchanged at 2,700mm, but its rear legroom seems more modest than cars with a similar wheelbase.

The most significant changes pertain to the cockpit. The Avante's infotainment touchscreen has Apple and Android interfaces, allowing you to pair your phone painlessly.

Your phone will never run out of juice either, with the car's wireless charging pad.

Hyundai's Corolla beater comes with a revised instrumentation cluster and dual-zone climate control.

The Elite version gets ventilated front seats, which are much appreciated in Singapore.

Keyless access, cruise control, drive mode select, blindspot warning and windscreen with automatic defogging function are part of the package.

The car even has a sensor system which delays door unlocking if it senses an oncoming vehicle.

These are small things which add up to help make the Avante a credible contender in the hotly contested family car segment. Even if the segment is increasingly overrun by crossovers and SUVs.

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Your car is watching you

Start-ups at this year's CES show offer a glimpse of how sensor technology can enhance safety and generate revenue too

will react to the potentially disconcerting idea of being watched – then warned – in a vehicle, especially as cars become living rooms with the advent of self-driving.

"There's no doubt this is a hot area," said Mr Modar Alaoui, founder of Eyeris. But he believes that once carmakers see the benefits of a camera tracking the driver, they will opt for more.

Regulators like the technology at its most basic. Eye-tracking can determine if a driver is not paying attention or, worse, is asleep. That will become essential as cars become more autonomous, for "Level 3" autonomy where the car handles most driving, but returns control to the driver in trickier situations.

European car safety rating programme Euro New Car Assessment Programme has proposed that cars with driver monitoring for 2020 should earn higher ratings.

In the wake of a 2016 fatal Tesla crash, the US National Transportation Safety Board recommended carmakers develop means to better track driver engagement.

But carmakers are more excited by the revenue possibilities when the data creates a more customised experience for riders, generating higher premiums and tie-ins with third parties, such as retailers.

"The reason (the camera) is going to sweep across the cabin is not because of distraction, but because of all the side benefits," said Mr Mike Ramsey, Gartner's automotive research director. "Companies that are trying to monetise data from the connected car are investigating ways to use eye-tracking technology."

Carmakers could gather and sell the data. A billboard advertiser might be eager to know how many commuters look at his sign.

Tracking the gaze of a passenger towards a store or restaurant could result in a discount offered to him.

Companies say carmakers will decide how the data is used, but consumers will be able to opt out.

Some still see interior cameras as a bad idea, however. Cars are still considered private zones, said Vayyar co-founder Raviv Melamed. "They think they're in their own living room, they behave like they're not outside. It's obvious no one wants a camera," he added.

But the brakes towards having one have been released. REUTERS

Occupants in a car are seen on a monitor using technology by Silicon Valley company Eyeris Technologies, which uses cameras and artificial intelligence to track drivers and passengers for safety benefits. Eyeris showcased the technology at this year's CES in Las Vegas.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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Smooth and stylish Stonic

Kia's subcompact crossover offers decent looks and a fuss-free, engaging drive

Chong Jun Liang

Kia's new subcompact Stonic is the latest addition to an already crowded crossover segment.

The car scores a good first impression. It has a muscular silhouette, with bold lines exuding an air of adventure.

Wearing bright colours (29 to choose from) and riding on 17-inch wheels (SX version), the newcomer turns heads with a road presence which almost matches that of Audi's smaller sport utility vehicles (SUVs).

In fact, it is easy to mistake the Stonic for the handsome Audi Q2, which is also available in a yellow hue. After all, it is no secret that Kia's chief design officer, Mr Peter Schreyer, used to work for Audi.

Even its strange plastic grille, which looks quite different from Kia's signature "Tiger Nose" honeycomb grille, does nothing to dent its stylish good looks.

The Stonic packs a 1-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine which churns out 118bhp and 171Nm of torque. While these numbers may seem ordinary, the car zips around with a youthful exuberance.

It actually feels quicker than the 10.6 seconds it takes to clock the century sprint.

It pulls well and never feels laggy at junctions. Even on expressways, the tiny car possesses enough power for many overtaking manoeuvres.

Coupled with a seven-speed dual-clutch gearbox that is smooth and effective, the crossover delivers a fuss-free city ride. The engine starts to sound laboured only when you floor the accelerator.

Still, that does not make the Stonic any less engaging. In fact, its firm suspension gives it a rather sporty gair and the car negotiates corners more confidently than the average SUV.

Surprisingly, the Stonic is equipped with adaptive headlights, with the beams moving in the direction of the steering wheel, giving the driver a better view of the road ahead.

Kia cars, however, are known to pack more features than comparable rivals.

For an entry-level model, the Stonic is no less impressive. Apple Carplay is standard fare. It allows the driver to access smartphone functions such as navigation and music on the car's 7-inch touch-screen infotainment system.

The pricier SX version comes with sunroof, climate control, LED tail-lights, a start/stop button, a leather-wrapped steering wheel and gear knob, metal pedals and rain-activated wipers.

There are shortcomings, though, including a poorer-than-expected fuel economy of just 9km a litre – a far cry from the stated 18.5km a litre. But to be fair, I drove the car with a heavy right foot and mainly in stop-start traffic.

The boot is also relatively small at 352 litres. But this can be expanded by flipping the rear seats down.

With a price tag of \$80,999, the Stonic offers much value for money. It is hard to think of another car in its class that can offer better bang for the buck.

junliang@sph.com.sg



The Stonic's 1-litre three-cylinder turbocharged engine churns out 118bhp and 171Nm of torque, helping it zip around with a youthful exuberance.
ST PHOTO: CHONG JUN LIANG

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Price: \$80,999 with certificate of entitlement

Engine: 998cc inline-3 turbocharged

Transmission: Seven-speed dual-clutch with manual override

Power: 118bhp at 6,000rpm

Torque: 171Nm at 1,500–4,000rpm

0–100kmh: 10.6 seconds

Top speed: 185kmh

Fuel consumption: 5.4litres/100km

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Roomier Mercedes-Benz CLA Coupe

The new Mercedes-Benz CLA Coupe (right) is bigger all round, but sits slightly lower than its predecessor. With a longer wheelbase, it also promises more room. It will have a host of new features, including gesture control, augmented reality navigation and voice commands.

**All-electric cars make up one-third of Norwegian market**

Almost a third of all new cars sold in Norway last year ran on batteries, reinforcing the Nordic country's reputation as the world's best market for electric vehicles.

Bloomberg reported that oil-rich Norway aims to eliminate all emissions from new cars by 2025 and offers generous subsidies for buyers who opt to go electric.

Last year, all-electric cars made up 31.2 per cent of the Norwegian market, an improvement of more than 10 percentage points from the previous year, the Norwegian Road Federation said.

Three of the five most popular models were electric, with the Leaf from Nissan claiming the top spot, ahead of BMW's i3 and Tesla's Model X.

Hyundai Motor and WayRay unveil next-generation visual technology

Hyundai Motor, in collaboration with Swiss deep-tech start-up WayRay Ag, has unveiled the world's first holographic augmented reality navigation system, which will feature in the new Genesis G80. The two parties will continue long-term road tests in South Korea to minimise errors.

**Volkswagen unveils mobile charging station**

Volkswagen has offered a glimpse of its mobile quick-charging station (left), which can be set up anywhere – independent of power supply. The mobile charging station works according to the principle of a power bank – the portable device people use to charge smartphones.

With a charging capacity of up to 360kWh, it can charge up to 15 e-vehicles. It takes only 17 minutes on average to charge one vehicle.

The first mobile quick-charging stations will be set up as early as the first half of this year in Wolfsburg, Germany. They will be rolled out to other cities from next year.

Mercedes-Benz A-class safest small family car

The European New Car Assessment Programme (NCAP) has named its annual "Best in Class" winners.

The Mercedes-Benz A-class has emerged as the safest among Small Family Cars and last year's overall best performer.

The Lexus ES is tops among Large Family Cars and also Euro NCAP's best-performing hybrid, while the fuel-cell-powered Hyundai Nexo is the best Large Off-Roader.

Euro NCAP secretary-general Michiel van Ratingen said: "Euro NCAP put automated driving technology to the test in 2018 for the first time and our findings helped clarify some of the confusion that motoring consumers are currently experiencing."

"Assisted driving systems can bring safety and convenience benefits, but full automation is a long way off."

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SEAT Leon CUPRA 2.0 TSI / Fuel Consumption 6.6/100km / VES Band C1 - SEAT Toledo 1.4 TSI / Fuel Consumption 4.9/100km / VES Band A2 - SEAT Arona 1.0 EcoTSI / Fuel Consumption 5.0/100km / VES Band A2
SEAT Ateca 1.4 TSI / Fuel Consumption 5.5/100km / VES Band B - SEAT Alhambra 1.4 TSI / Fuel Consumption 6.1/100km / VES Band C1





A more powerful Nissan Leaf

Nissan has unveiled a longer-range and more powerful version of its electric Leaf.

The Leaf 3.Zero (above) features an output of 160kW (up from 110kW) and 340Nm of torque (versus 320Nm) and a driving range of up to 383km (versus 270km). This version is unlikely to be introduced in Singapore, though.

Chinese ride-hailing app branches out into lending and insurance

Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing has launched a slew of financial products, reported Xinhua. Insurance covering critical illnesses, credit and lending, wealth management and vehicle financing are part of the menu.

The insurance and lending products mainly target gig economy workers and are built on its credit mechanism and data-based risk control architecture, Didi said.

The company now serves about 550 million users and has offered flexible work to more than 31 million drivers. It has also branched into services like car maintenance and food delivery.

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Should I step on the brake while changing gear?

You can enhance the smoothness of gear changes by gently easing off the throttle. There is no need to lift off the throttle abruptly or apply your brake whenever you want a gear change to take place.

These days, automatic transmissions are very smooth with upshifts even when you are accelerating hard or if you are in manual mode and shifting gears yourself.

This also applies to double-clutch-transmissions. If you are in manual mode, easing off the throttle just before shifting up will result in a smoother gear change.

With manual gearboxes, press the clutch in a fraction of a second before releasing the throttle and then go through the motion of selecting the gear. This way, you will not feel the jerk from a sudden cut in power.

The only time you should depress the brake pedal is when you shift from, say, Park to Drive when stationary. Or from Drive to Reverse. This is more for safety than for mechanical reasons.

Shreejit Changaroth

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To mark its 120th anniversary, Cycle & Carriage is giving away 120 Exceptional Journeys to Mongolia, Nepal and Korea.

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Participants can visit www.cyclecarriage.com/120 and submit the entry form between now and Nov 30. It is open to individuals aged 18 and older as well as companies.

The system will offer convenience to drivers who face over-crowding at parking and charging locations as electric vehicle numbers grow steadily. It relocates fully charged vehicles from charging stations and allows other waiting electric vehicles to charge.

Upon commanding the vehicle to charge using a smartphone, the ve-

Kia and Hyundai show concept of driverless car-charging and parking system

Kia Motors Corporation and Hyundai Motor Company have unveiled the concept of an electric-vehicle wireless charging system with a new Automated Valet Parking System (AVPS).

The overall process takes place via continuous communication between electric vehicle, parking facility, charging system and driver. The parking facility sends location details of empty parking spaces and charging stations, while the charging system updates the charging status of the vehicle in real-time.

hicle will automatically cruise to a vacant wireless-charging station. When the vehicle is fully charged, it will relocate to another vacant parking space using the AVPS, allowing other vehicles to charge at the spot.

When the driver calls for the vehicle, it will then autonomously return to the location of the driver.

Upon commanding the vehicle to charge using a smartphone, the ve-

Christopher Tan

PHOTOS: MERCEDES-BENZ, NISSAN, VOLKSWAGEN

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MeAndMyCar

Classic love

Mr Bernard Teo, who drives a 30-year-old Mercedes-Benz 300 SEL, likes cars which stand out from the crowd

Toh Yong Chuan

Entrepreneur Bernard Teo is co-founder of an online advertising start-up. But the 41-year-old is not driving a car which is funky or modern – attributes which tend to be favoured by start-up types.

Instead, he drives a 30-year-old Mercedes-Benz 300 SEL.

"This is a classic Mercedes," he says.

The 300 SEL is not the first Mercedes he has owned. He first bought an E200 (W124) that was about 19 years old in 2013.

But the car was destroyed in an accident the following year. He walked away from the incident without any injury.

"I was very impressed by how solid the car was," he recalls.

He was looking to buy another E200 when he chanced upon the 300 SEL at a used-car dealership.

"It looks like a larger version of the E200," he says.

The 300 SEL is the predecessor of the modern-day flagship S-class.

It was produced from 1980 to 1991, and was also known by its model code W126.

It comes in two versions – SE (normal wheelbase) and SEL (long wheelbase), which is more than 5.1m long.

The March 1990 car that Mr Teo set his eyes on, then 25 years old,



had two owners. It had less than 250,000km on the odometer.

"The car dealer said the first owner transferred the car to his daughter," he says. "The mileage was low for a 25-year-old car."

He paid about \$25,000 for the car, which was about five years to the expiry of its certificate of entitlement (COE). "That is only about \$5,000 depreciation a year," he notes.

But the annual road tax of the car is rather high, he says. The 300 SEL is powered by a 3-litre engine and attracts an annual road tax of about \$4,000, including a 50 per cent surcharge for older cars.

Despite its age, Mr Teo says he has not done any major work on the car. "Most of the things still work," he says, showing off the car's motorised reclining rear seats.

The only major repair he did was a \$2,000 overhaul of the gearbox in June 2017.

But some plastic parts – like speaker covers – have turned brittle, so he is careful when handling them.

On whether an old Mercedes suits the image of a start-up owner, he says: "The car has to reflect the personality of the owner. I like my car to be different from the crowd, but I am not the flashy type."

He has previously owned a Volvo XC70 station wagon, a Toyota RAV4 sport utility vehicle, a Chevrolet station wagon and a Suzuki APV.

"They are 'squarish' cars," he says with a laugh. "You can say that I like straight lines and rulers."

The 300 SEL is Mr Teo's daily ride. His 30-something wife, an interior designer, has her own car. The couple have a nine-year-old son and a seven-year-old daughter.

He says that driving the more-than-5m-long car is not without occasional headaches.

Small parking spaces, for in-

stance, pose a problem.

"It will protrude out of a reverse parking lot," he says, adding that he rarely attempts parallel parking.

According to Land Transport Authority guidelines to building developers, the minimum length of a perpendicular parking space is 4.8m and a parallel parking space has to be at least 5.4m long.

Mr Teo lives in a condominium in the eastern part of Singapore that has a mechanised parking system, which his car does not fit in.

"I have to apply for season parking at a nearby mall," he says.

Despite these inconveniences, he is planning to renew the car's COE for another 10 years before it expires in March.

"With maintenance, this car will keep running," he says, noting that the mileage of the car is about 350,000km.

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Stricter rules on how firms promote infant milk

They will be barred from giving sponsorships to hospitals to push their formula brands

Tiffany Fumiko Tay

Infant formula firms will soon be barred from providing both financial and in-kind inducements to hospitals to promote their brands to mothers, under changes to guidelines that govern the sale of infant foods in Singapore.

While cash payments were already disallowed, sponsorships in the form of hospital dinner and dance functions, for example, have been highlighted as problematic.

Public hospitals that offer maternity services are already prohibited from entering into such arrangements with formula companies.

The new rules are part of the revised code of ethics by a committee administered by the Health Promotion Board.

Making the announcement yesterday, Senior Minister of State for



Health Amy Khor said the code's scope has been expanded to cover formula milk for infants aged up to 12 months, compared with six months previously.

More sponsorship restrictions have also been imposed to "reduce the reliance on infant formula by mothers", Dr Khor said.

Formula milk firms will have up to a year's grace period to abide by the revised code in their promotion and distribution practices. Adherence is obligatory, though there are no penalties for breaching the code.

The review comes two years after the rising prices of formula milk prompted the formation of a gov-

ernment task force to tackle the issue, such as by tightening regulations on labelling and advertising and facilitating imports of more affordable options.

A report by the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore released in 2017 highlighted sponsorship and payment arrangements between manufacturers and private hospitals as "conflict of interest" deals that should be reviewed. Examples included manufacturers sponsoring conference and training course fees and materials. In return, their brands would be offered as the default formula milk in maternity rooms for a longer period. Par-

ents tend not to switch after leaving the hospital, the report said.

Thomson Medical Centre said then that its suppliers paid for their brands to be part of the hospital's monthly rotation, and that most of the money was channelled to support activities that benefit patients.

A spokesman yesterday said it is "progressively reviewing our partnerships with all major milk companies" in order to be Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative-certified.

Dr Chua Mei Chien, who heads KK Women's and Children's Hospital's neonatology department, said having stricter governance and greater transparency will help to prevent conflicts of interest between the formula companies and healthcare institutions.

The review of guidelines that govern the sale of infant foods in Singapore comes two years after the rising prices of formula milk prompted the formation of a government task force to tackle the issue.

ST PHOTO: KELVIN CHNG

The Singapore Infant Food Industry Self-Regulatory Committee, made up of the six major milk manufacturers here, including Nestle and Abbott, welcomed the revisions to the code. Its executive director Venetta Miranda told The Straits Times that the committee was heartened that a collaborative approach was taken in refreshing the code while "taking into account the national context and needs of mothers and infants in Singapore".

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12

Number of months' grace period formula milk companies will have to abide by the revised code in their promotion and distribution practices.

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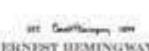
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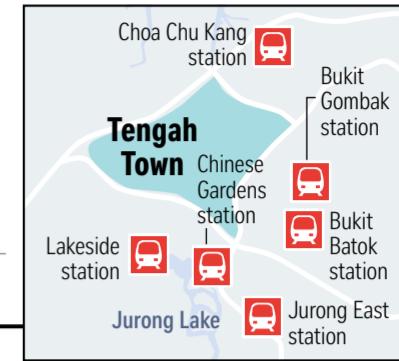
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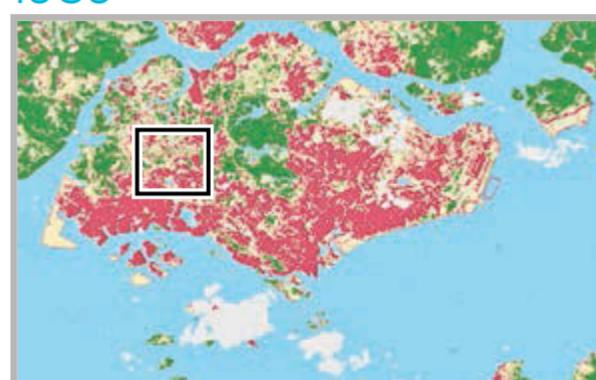
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Forest regeneration

Singapore's first "forest town" in Tengah was mostly built on land with vegetation of low conservation significance, according to the Housing Board. It does not plan to release the full environmental baseline study done for the area. But the Nature Society (Singapore) said rare animal species do live in the Tengah forests. Maps made by an NUS scientist using data from Landsat, a satellite imaging programme by the United States government, show significant regeneration of the forest over a relatively short time.



1989



2013



THE NATURE SOCIETY (SINGAPORE) HAS ALSO RECORDED RARE ANIMAL SPECIES FOUND IN THE TENGAH FORESTS.

Yellow flat butterfly

This rare species has been found in only two locations in Singapore – the Tengah forests and vegetation near the Jurong Eco-Garden

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Changeable hawk-eagle

This bird species has also been spotted nesting there



Sunda pangolin

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Source: DAVID TAN PHOTOS: MARCUS CHUA, MEI HWANG, WING CHONG STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Dispute over key findings of Tengah environmental study

Ecologists disagree that the area's vegetation was mostly of 'low conservation significance'

Audrey Tan
Environment Correspondent

Environmentalists are disputing the findings of another environmental study, this time calling on the Housing Board to make public the full report on Tengah, where secondary forests are being cleared for public housing.

But it appears that HDB has no intention of doing so. In response to queries from The Straits Times, a spokesman would only say: "HDB has shared the key findings of the Tengah Environmental Baseline Study with you on Oct 29, 2018." She would not be drawn into stating why the report would not be made public.

HDB had told the media last October that it commissioned the study to ensure that Singapore's first "forest town" for public housing is built in an environmentally responsible manner. The first tranche of 1,620 flats was launched for sale last November.

HDB had sent an e-mail of the key findings by Aecom, an independent consultant. The study, said HDB, had found that the Tengah vegetation was mostly of "low conservation significance", where common animals such as wild boars, long-tailed macaques and monitor lizards thrive.

But ecologists consider the forests there an important vegetation node that connects the dense vegetation in the Western Catchment with the

servation significance and... relatively young", due to varied land use in the past for factories, villages and plantations.

When the development is complete, only about 10 per cent of the original forests is expected to remain. But HDB said it has in place measures to reduce impact of the development on wildlife in Tengah, including a forest corridor to facilitate the movement of wildlife.

There has been tension over other environmental studies.

In two high-profile cases – the Cross Island MRT Line, and the Mandai hub of wildlife parks – nature groups pointed to the lack of clarity of terms used in the separate reports released months apart in 2016, and the lack of consideration of the Singapore context. Both cases also raised the question of how transparent such reports should be.

The Government had said in 2017 that it wants to strengthen the process for environmental impact assessments. In an update yesterday, a spokesman for the Ministry of National Development said that as part of the review, existing processes are now being studied "with a view to improving them, taking on board lessons and feedback from past experiences".

"These include studying how best to strengthen baseline survey methodology and how to ensure that mitigation measures are implemented in the right spirit, taking into consideration Singapore's unique urban context," she said, adding that more details will be shared later this year.

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No more appeals made in Davis case: Mindef

Teen footballer currently with EPL club Fulham due to enlist for NS in about a month

Shamir Osman

With about a month to go before he is due to enlist for national service, the Ministry of Defence (Mindef) has revealed that it has not received further appeals for deferment from footballer Ben Davis.

Davis, who turned 18 in November, is currently on the books of English Premier League (EPL) side Fulham, the first Singaporean to sign professional terms with an EPL team. Should he fail to return by his enlistment date next month, he will be considered a defaulter.

"As explained in Parliament in August 2018, Mr Harvey Davis' application for his son to defer NS to play for Fulham FC was not granted as there was no commitment to serve Singapore or our national interests. Further, Mr Benjamin Davis is playing for Fulham FC's Under-18 team as an English national. Mindef has not received further appeals for deferment from Mr Davis' family," said Mindef in a reply to media queries yesterday. "Mr Davis has been is-

sued with an Enlistment Notice in September last year and is due to enlist for NS in February 2019."

Davis' appeal for deferment had sparked a national debate last year.

Some backed the footballer in his pursuit to be the first Singaporean to take to the pitch in an EPL fixture, while others called for him to do his duty to the country.

Only three athletes – swimmers Joseph Schooling and Quah Zheng Wen, and sailor Maximilian Soh – have met the deferment criteria in the past 15 years. Schooling and Quah have represented the Republic at various Olympic Games, with the former making history by winning a gold medal in the 100m butterfly at the 2016 Rio Games.

Mindef had earlier noted that there were programmes in place to help national athletes continue training while serving their NS. "Many talented sportsmen, including footballers, have completed their NS dutifully first before pursuing their professional careers. Mindef has in place schemes during full-time NS to enable them to continue training



Singaporean footballer Ben Davis (at right) during a Fulham Under-18 match against Chelsea. The teenager's appeal for deferment had sparked a national debate last year. He is the first Singaporean to sign professional terms with an EPL team. PHOTO: FULHAM FC

to retain and improve their skills," it said last July. "We also provide additional training opportunities in the lead-up to major Games such as the South-east Asian and Olympic Games where our sportsmen represent Singapore and do us proud."

Another facet of the debate saw some in the sporting fraternity call for a look into guidelines governing long-term NS deferment for team sports as opposed to individual sports.

The matter of deferment was raised in Parliament in August, where Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen said: "Deferment cannot be for that individual, no matter how talented, to pursue his own interests or career. In other words, because I am so exceptional and talented, I deserve to be deferred."

"This is not the Enlistment Act, no matter how talented. And even if it vicariously brings credit or fame to Singapore, because that would be fundamentally wrong and goes against the core principle of equity.

The Enlistment Act is blind to talent, personal considerations and personal circumstances."

Davis has yet to play a senior match for Fulham, who are second from bottom in the 20-team EPL. He has an older brother, William, who has already completed NS, and a younger brother, Jai.

His father Harvey declined to comment on the matter but a source, who did not want to be named, revealed that Davis' progress at the club suggests that the footballer is unlikely to return.

"Despite the fact that Ben has yet to turn out for the Fulham first team, he has made good progress and has already attracted attention," he said.

In his first season at the club, Davis made 10 appearances for the Young Whites in midfield. He had a pass accuracy of 90 per cent, making 13 tackles and 16 interceptions in 10 matches. This season, he has so far played 14 out of 17 games.

shamiro@sph.com.sg

Man nabbed over brick-throwing incident outside Parliament House

A 45-year-old man was arrested for criminal trespass after he drove up and threw a brick on the driveway outside the secured main gate of Parliament House yesterday.

The police were alerted to the incident at around 4pm.

The driver, a Singaporean, was later arrested following investigations. The Straits Times understands that he was alone when the

incident took place. Parliament was not in session at the time.

A photograph circulating on social media of a ComfortDelGro taxi's mobile data terminal showed an alert asking taxi drivers to be on the lookout for a black Lexus sport utility vehicle which had reportedly been driven into Parliament House.

The police are investigating.

Ex-cabby charged over NUS student's death

Shaffiq Alkhatib

A former taxi driver was taken to court yesterday over a traffic accident that killed a National University of Singapore (NUS) student.

Yap Kok Hua, 55, was ferrying NUS student Kathy Ong Kai Ting, 19, and three of her schoolmates in his taxi on April 19 last year when the tragedy occurred around 7.30pm.

He was charged with causing her death by driving in a negligent manner. The Straits Times understands that he is no longer a taxi driver.

According to court documents, Yap was driving along Commonwealth Avenue West when he allegedly failed to give way to a car while making a right turn into Clementi Road, and the two vehicles collided with each other.

The four students and the drivers of both vehicles were then taken to the National University Hospital.

Miss Ong, who sat in the rear, was later pronounced dead. An only child, she was a first-year environmental studies student and a resident of the university's Tembusu College.

Hundreds of her friends turned up at her wake at the Church of St Teresa in Kampong Bahru where

she was baptised.

The accident put the spotlight on busy junctions with similar right-turn lanes.

Singapore Road Safety Council chairman Bernard Tay said: "When you are on the road, motorists have to look out for all road users. You have to be very sure no car or pedestrian is crossing."

"If not, you have to slowly edge out, so slow that you could stop if you have to."

Mr Gerard Pereira, a business development manager at the Singapore Safety Driving Centre, advised passengers in rear seats to always wear seat belts. "Usually the back seat passengers are the ones most severely injured in accidents because they do not wear seat belts, and there is nothing preventing them from going forward."

Yap is represented by lawyers Josephus Tan and Cory Wong from Invictus Law.

They are representing him pro bono.

He is now out on bail of \$10,000 and will be back in court on Feb 1.

If convicted of causing Miss Ong's death by negligent driving, he can be jailed for up to two years and fined.

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From left: Professor Tan Kok Hian; Professor Alex Siu, CEO of KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH); Senior Minister of State for Health Amy Khor; Dr Chua Mei Chien; and Associate Professor Ng Kee Chong, chairman of the medical board at KKH, at the launch of a set of new guidelines on optimal perinatal nutrition yesterday. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

Over 1 in 4 pregnant women put on too much weight: Study

Increasing research proof shows need to optimise perinatal nutrition, says Amy Khor

Vanessa Liu

More than one in four women in Singapore are putting on too much weight during their pregnancies, a study has shown.

In the neonatal and obstetric risk assessment conducted between 2010 and 2014 by the Integrated Platform for Research in Advancing Metabolic Health Outcomes of Women and Children, 26.2 per cent of 704 pregnant women here had gestational weight gain above recommended guidelines. The guidelines differ for pregnant mothers of different body mass indexes.

"Many people feel that when a woman is pregnant, she should eat for two. But in fact, the additional calories that she needs to take a day are only about 300, which is 10 per cent to 15 per cent of her baseline calorie requirement," said Dr Chua Mei Chien, senior consultant and head of the neonatology department at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH) yesterday.

Gaining excessive weight during pregnancy has been linked to a higher risk of macrosomic babies – those who are significantly larger than average. For Asian babies, this is above 4kg.

Macrosomic babies in turn are more likely to become obese by the time they reach kindergarten,

according to a 2017 study by researchers from the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

Nurse Jaslin Teo, 29, gave birth to her first child four months ago. She said: "It was hard initially for me to watch my diet. But after some time it got better. I love eating honeyed cornflakes before I sleep, but after I noticed my weight had increased quite fast, I stopped eating it. I was worried that it would increase the risk of gestational diabetes."

High gestational weight gain, maternal obesity and excessive milk-feeding were some issues raised at the launch of a set of new guidelines on optimal perinatal nutrition at KKH. "Perinatal" refers to the first 1,000 days of life from conception to age two.

The guidelines build on those for gestational diabetes launched last year and were developed with ref-

erence to local research findings, as well as recommendations from key international publications.

Increasing evidence from international and local studies has emphasised the need to optimise perinatal nutrition, said Senior Minister of State for Health Amy Khor, guest of honour at the event. "New evidence also shows that adverse BMI (body mass index) trajectories in childhood can be successfully modified only through interventions made before six years of age," she added.

Professor Tan Kok Hian, president of the Perinatal Society of Singapore, noted: "Childhood obesity is likely to persist and progress into adulthood, and these individuals are at higher risk of getting chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension."

Dr Chua also highlighted exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate weaning in the post-natal period in the new guidelines. "Exclusive breastfeeding offers moderate protection against excessive weight gain in infancy and later obesity, with the risk reducing by 4 per cent for each month of breastfeeding up to nine months."

Dr Khor noted that by 2020, all nine maternity hospitals here will be certified under the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, which is awarded by the World Health Organisation and United Nations Children's Fund and encourages breastfeeding by facilitating skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby for at least an hour immediately after delivery.

Additional calories that a pregnant woman needs to take a day, which is 10 per cent to 15 per cent of her baseline calorie requirement.

She should not be eating for two.

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Additional calories that a pregnant woman needs to take a day, which is 10 per cent to 15 per cent of her baseline calorie requirement.

She should not be eating for two.

\$1m prize for innovative solutions for clean energy, sustainability

Chery Teh

Local non-profit organisation Temasek Foundation has launched its Liveability Challenge this year, issuing a global call for companies to come up with innovative solutions for clean energy and sustainability in tropical cities.

Its Ecosperity arm is offering a \$1 million prize – which it claims is the biggest in Asia for such a competition – to the winning company, which will go towards project development, crowdfunding campaigns and mentoring opportunities.

The challenge is being organised by Eco-Business magazine in partnership with this year's Ecosperity Week in June when the contest's finale will be held.

A total of 28 partners from business, civil society and government sectors have announced their support for The Liveability Challenge, almost double the number from last year's inaugural competition.

"We believe that business can be prosperous when done in an ecologically friendly way," said Mr Lim Hock Chuan, chief executive of Temasek Foundation Ecosperity.

"Last year, The Liveability Challenge was a great success with over 200 applications from 35 countries, and we are looking forward to more."

Last year's winner, RWDC Industries, a Singapore-based biodegradable technology firm, was awarded \$980,000 to jump-start the testing and production of its drinking straws and other biodegradable alternatives to plastic products – which contribute to a sustainable, or "circular", economy.

Organisers say this year's challenge has extra importance with humanity having only 12 years to curb its carbon emissions and keep global warming below 1.5 deg C, or risk an irreversible climate crisis, according to the recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"To give the world a fighting chance at preventing runaway climate change, humanity must slash emissions by 45 per cent and it is clear that incremental improvements will not be enough," said Ms Jessica Cheam, managing editor of Eco-Business.

"But we believe in the power of human ingenuity and determina-

tion, which is why this year's challenge aims to tackle two major areas of concern in sustainability: energy and the circular economy.

"With more funding and support this year, the challenge aims to drive impact and ensure a sustainable future for urban residents in the tropical belt, who are among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change in the decades to come."

Until April 5, the challenge's organisers will accept proposals for energy and circular economy solutions that have already completed proof of concept. The finalists will be announced on May 6.

Finalists will go for a "boot camp" on June 6, with the final to be held the following day.

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Police warn against WhatsApp scams

Ng Huiwen

At least 10 people have fallen victim so far this month to scammers who took over their WhatsApp accounts and used them to get money or gift cards.

The police, in a statement yesterday, warned the public against being duped by such scams, in which WhatsApp accounts are compromised after victims receive a WhatsApp message from a supposed friend asking for their WhatsApp verification code.

The victims lose access to their WhatsApp account after sending over the verification code to the friend whose account was first compromised.

The police said scammers have used accounts they took over to deceive other unsuspecting victims into transferring money or sending over points which can be used to make online purchases.

Some victims are also known to have bought gift cards and sent the codes for the cards to the scammers. The scammers then sell the gift-card codes online.

The police have advised the public to be wary of unusual requests received over WhatsApp, even if they were sent by their WhatsApp contacts.

They should also call their friend to verify the authenticity of the request.

WhatsApp accounts can also be protected by enabling a two-step verification feature, which is available under "Account" in the "Settings" tab within the app.

To provide information about such scams, call the police hotline on 1800-255-0000, or submit the information online at www.police.gov.sg/iwitness

For scam-related advice, call the anti-scam helpline on 1800-722-6688 or visit www.scamalert.sg

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Supply of lift parts: Feedback sought on two firms' proposals



A lift lobby at a housing block in Compassvale Drive. The proposed commitments by lift companies Chevalier and Fujitec Singapore will ensure that the companies sell parts to third-party lift contractors on a "fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory basis" and check that the purchaser is qualified to service the lifts. ST FILE PHOTO

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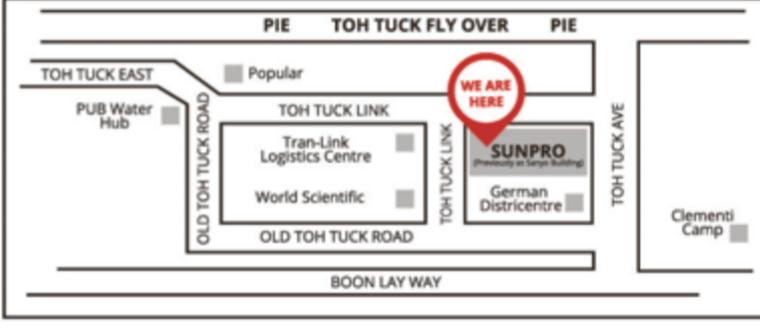
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Consultation to help watchdog assess if proposals address competition issues

Derek Wong

Singapore's competition watchdog, which has been investigating alleged refusals by suppliers to provide spare parts for the maintenance of lifts in Housing Board estates, is seeking public feedback on proposals by two lift companies.

The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCCS) said yesterday it is conducting public consultation on proposals by lift companies Chevalier and Fujitec Singapore, in which they commit to supplying lift spare parts under certain conditions.

In 2016, the commission said it was investigating alleged claims that some lift manufacturers had refused to supply vital spare parts, such as motherboards, to third-party contractors for the maintenance of lifts in HDB estates.

Each estate usually has multiple brands of lifts installed. Town councils can appoint the original lift installers for maintenance services or appoint a third-party contractor.

A lift manufacturer has an advantage when tendering for maintenance contracts, as it has the parts for its own brand of lifts.

If a lift company does not provide essential parts to third-party contractors, they may be prevented from effectively competing for contracts to maintain and service lifts of that particular brand in Singapore.

The proposed commitments by Chevalier and Fujitec Singapore will ensure that the companies sell parts to third-party lift contractors on a "fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory basis" and check that the purchaser is qualified to service the lifts.

They also include clarifying liability in the event of accidents, injuries or loss, and ensuring spare parts purchased are not modified.

The public feedback is meant to help assess whether the commitments will address competition concerns in relation to the supply of lift spare parts, after which the CCCS will decide whether to accept the commitments.

The public consultation will close on Jan 24. More details can be found on the CCCS website.

In March last year, the competition watchdog accepted voluntary commitments by two lift part suppliers – BNF Engineering and C&W Services Operations – after public consultation. The commitments were amended and finalised following feedback before being accepted.

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If a lift company does not provide essential parts to third-party contractors, they may be prevented from effectively competing for contracts to maintain and service lifts of that particular brand in Singapore.

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Cleaner gets 15 months' jail over role in attack on siblings

Shaffiq Alkhatib

A part-time cleaner took part in her friend's plan to seek revenge on a pair of siblings and boiled some water which was used to cause second-degree burns to the two victims.

Nurhanifah Juma'at, 27, also filmed the assault that lasted about four minutes, moving from place to place to capture different angles.

She was sentenced to one year and three months' jail yesterday after pleading guilty on Jan 3 to one count of voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means.

It all started on July 7 last year when Nurhanifah agreed to her friend Norhayati Jaffar's revenge plan. The 35-year-old woman was angry after watching a video clip on Facebook which showed her younger brother, Mr Muhammad Putera Shafiekkh Jaffar, being beaten up by a group that included Mr Muhammad Faizal Omar, 27.

The court heard that Mr Faizal's sister, Ms Nur Farahita Omar, 25, had looked on while the group ganged up against Mr Putera.

Norhayati then hatched a plan to take revenge.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Sheryl

Yeo said Norhayati invited Mr Faizal and Ms Farahita to her home, saying that it was for a Hari Raya celebration and she also had something urgent to discuss with them.

Court documents did not reveal the nature of Norhayati's relationship with the siblings.

Norhayati told Nurhanifah to boil some water and roped in her other younger brother, Muhammad Bakhtiyar Jaffar, 33, to take part in the assault.

When Mr Faizal and Ms Farahita arrived at the Spooner Road flat near Jalan Bukit Merah on July 8 last year, Norhayati locked the gate behind them and started the attack with her brother. Norhayati repeatedly hit Ms Farahita with a bamboo stick and stomped on her abdomen.

The court heard that Bakhtiyar rained blows on Mr Faizal even while he was curled in a foetal position on the floor.

Norhayati also used the hot water to scald Ms Farahita on her neck, back and right ear before striking her neck with the water jug.

After Ms Farahita escaped, Norhayati joined Bakhtiyar in his attack on Mr Faizal using a bamboo stick, the court heard.

Mr Faizal was also scalded with



Nurhanifah Juma'at boiled water which was used by her friend to cause second-degree burns to two victims. ST PHOTO: WONG KWAI CHOW

hot water on the left side of his body before he managed to get away.

Court documents did not mention how he and his sister managed to get out of the locked flat.

The outcome of the case involving Mr Putera's assault was not mentioned in the documents.

The cases involving Norhayati and Bakhtiyar are still pending.

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SMU student nabbed for outrage of modesty

Alleged victim says she went to campus to study with him after they met via Instagram

Fabian Koh

A Singapore Management University (SMU) undergraduate has been arrested for aggravated outrage of modesty on campus, with the alleged victim telling The Straits Times on Thursday that she had gone there to study with him.

She is a 20-year-old undergraduate doing psychological science and is not from SMU. They had met on social media platform Instagram, she added.

She had posted about the alleged incident on her public Instagram account, saying it took place on Tuesday.

The police said they were alerted on Tuesday at 6.34am to a case of aggravated outrage of modesty at 90 Stamford Road, which is

the address of SMU's School of Economics. They arrested a 22-year-old man, who has since been released on bail, said a police spokesman on Thursday.

When contacted, the SMU student declined to comment, saying it is a police matter.

An SMU spokesman, when contacted, said the case is being taken "very seriously" and the university is looking into it. "We have embarked on our own internal inquiry while assisting the police with its investigations. As investigations are ongoing, we are not in a position to comment or provide any information," the spokesman added.

The alleged victim, in recounting the events to ST, said the man had messaged her on Jan 4 on her Instagram account, and they started chatting.

"I saw on Instagram that we have mutual friends from my workplace and secondary school, and they are decent people, so it seemed okay. If it were a stranger, that would be a red flag."

She said that when he asked her out for a meal, she declined and told him she has a boyfriend, but he responded that they could just be friends.

On Monday, he invited her to SMU to study, saying the campus study areas are open 24 hours, she said, adding that she thought it was a good idea since studying with another person would help her concentrate better.

When she arrived at 1am, the man used his student pass to enter the campus and they went to a Group Study Room, which is open only from 8am to 10pm. She was not aware it was closed as he had taken her in by a side entrance facing the YMCA building.

ST understands that the lift lobby at the School of Economics is accessible via a glass door that can be opened using a student card. As long as one person has tapped a card, multiple people can enter. This is in contrast to the main gantries at the front lobby, where a security guard post is located and everyone can enter only with his or her own pass.

When in the Group Study Room, the SMU student made advances and she pushed him away.

When asked why she did not leave, she said: "If it were a stranger, I would have walked off. But when you have mutual friends, it's harder to do it as you also have to 'give face', so at that point, I didn't know what to do."

As the night wore on, he went to sleep on the floor. She, too, took a nap, in another area of the room, as she intended to go to the gym later in the morning.

She said she was woken up by his violating her. As she lay stunned, he stood up and walked away. She took her belongings and headed to the ground level, where a security guard told her to call the police.

She told ST: "I felt that it was in a study room in a school, it was a safe place, and I was with someone whom my friends know. The thing I regret is meeting him, thinking it was just to study."

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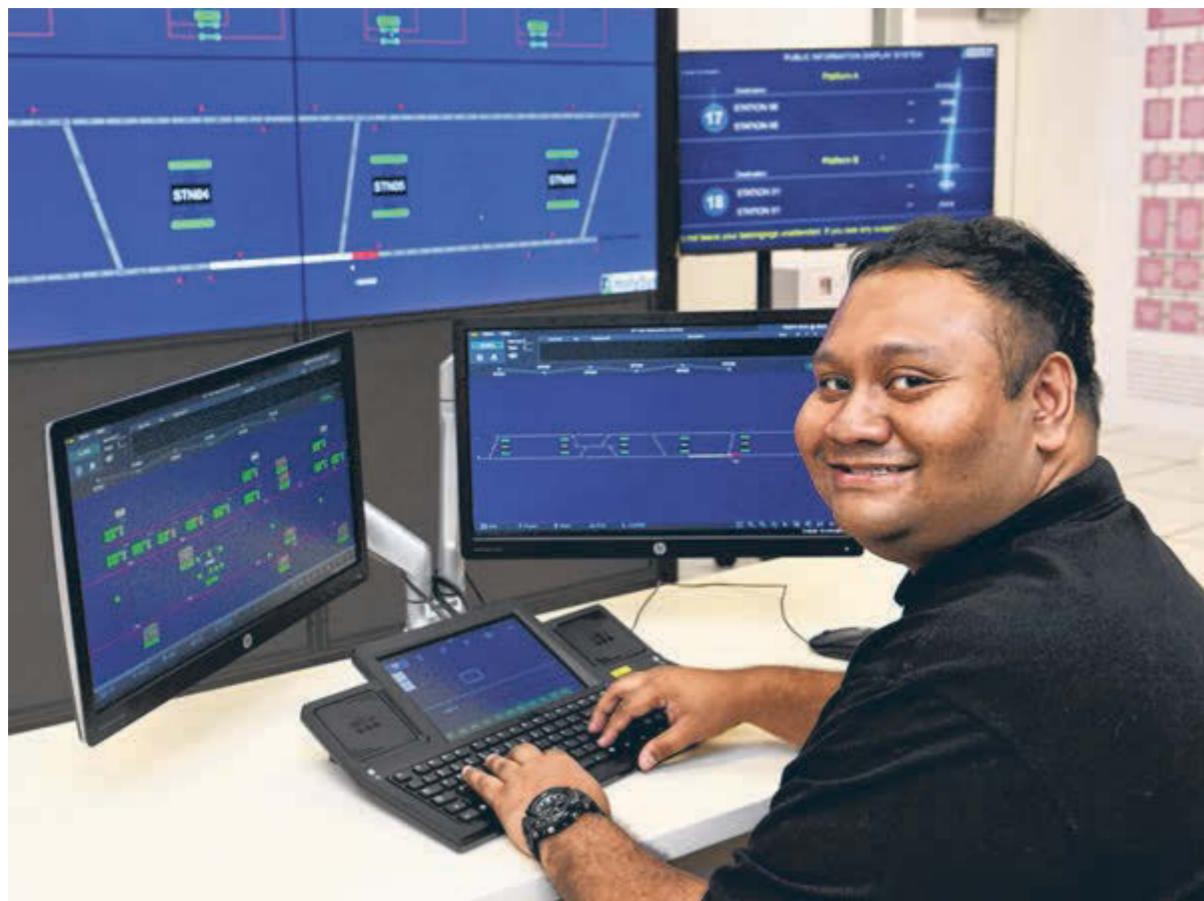
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Republic Polytechnic (RP) graduate Muhammad Syahirul Annur Musa in the RP-LTA Rail Operations Management Lab yesterday. RP signed an MOU with LTA, SMRT and SBS Transit to commit to developing the local land transport industry workforce and to growing the pool of professionals as Singapore moves towards a car-lite future. ST PHOTO: KHALID BABA

RP grad joins veteran dad in growing rail industry

His diploma course aims to address sector's manpower needs as Singapore goes car-lite

Fabian Koh

Mr Muhammad Syahirul Annur Musa, 28, grew up wanting to follow in his father's footsteps and work in the rail sector.

His father, Mr Musa Bari, 52, a rail services manager in SMRT, has been working in the industry for about two decades now.

At the age of 25, Mr Syahirul entered Republic Polytechnic (RP),

TACKLING CHALLENGES TOGETHER

Such partnerships are especially important in a time when industries are facing technological disruptions and fresh challenges from the evolving industry landscape.



MR YEO LI PHEOW, principal and CEO of RP, on working with cyber-security companies such as Ensign InfoSecurity.

majoring in rail operations management for his diploma in engineering systems and management.

Before that, he had been doing temporary administrative jobs for about two years.

Upon graduating last May as part of the first batch of graduates from his course, he found a job in SMRT as a train service controller.

He had done a five-month internship with SBS Transit in his final year, during which he was posted to the Operations Control Centre of the Downtown Line.

There, he was exposed to a live system, and observed and regulated train movement. He gained experience in handling situations such as signalling faults. "A key challenge the (staff) there face is the need to have fast critical thinking and decision-making ability. Your actions affect members of the public, and one decision can go on to affect thousands of commuters," he said.

Mr Syahirul's course aims to address the manpower needs of the growing rail industry in Singapore.

Yesterday, RP signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Land Transport Authority (LTA), SMRT and SBS Transit to commit to developing the local

land transport industry workforce and to growing the pool of professionals as Singapore moves towards a car-lite future.

SMRT chief technology officer Gan Boon Jin said that the collaboration will allow students to better understand the growing complexities in running the rail system, and "build engineering capabilities that will benefit the overall transport industry".

Senior Minister of State for Transport and Communications and Information Janil Puthucheary also officially opened the RP-LTA Rail Operations Management Lab. The facility is modelled after operations control centres for urban rail lines, usually located within the train depot.

Mr Syahirul said the laboratory represented the real-world setting, which is good for students because while some are able to easily understand things through theory, others learn better through hands-on practice in a live environment.

Dr Janil said the facility would help adequately prepare more people to enter the rail sector here, which is a sunrise industry, with Singapore's rail network growing from 230km today to 360km by 2030. The total workforce in the rail industry is expected to grow from over 9,000 today to more than 15,000 by 2030. To suit commuters' evolving needs, rail professionals have to pick up new and varied skills, he added.

Yesterday, Dr Janil also launched the Cyber Threat Intelligence Centre, a tie-up between RP and cybersecurity firms RSA and Ensign InfoSecurity, which will allow students pursuing infocommunications security management to manage realistic cyber-threat scenarios as part of their training. He also witnessed the signing of an MOU between RP and Ensign InfoSecurity.

Mr Yeo Li Pheow, principal and chief executive officer of RP, said working with such partners helps the school nurture skilled members of the future workforce.

"Such partnerships are especially important in a time when industries are facing technological disruptions and fresh challenges from the evolving industry landscape."

fabkoh@sph.com.sg

Man arrested over racial slurs scrawled along Geylang walkway

Cara Wong

A 30-year-old man has been arrested over a vandalism case in which racial slurs were scrawled along a sheltered walkway near Aljunied MRT station.

It is not clear when the scrawls, which targeted the Malay and Muslim community, first surfaced, although the police said they were alerted to an incident of vandalism in Lorong 25 Geylang at 8.15am on Monday.

The man was arrested on the same day following police investigations.

The offensive words were scribbled on three poles along the walkway, and on a concrete pillar supporting the nearby MRT track next to Geylang Methodist Primary and Secondary schools.

The Land Transport Authority, which oversees the upkeep of the structures, has worked with its maintenance contractors to remove the graffiti.

Local novelist Balli Kaur Jaswal expressed concerns about the derogatory words on her Facebook page yesterday morning.

Ms Jaswal said she was showing a friend, who was a foreigner, around the area yesterday when she noticed the graffiti.

"I was really surprised. I saw one at first and thought that I had read it wrongly, but I realised there were three in a row; it hit me then that it was quite deliberate that someone was writing these things to be seen. There is a large Muslim community in the area," said Ms Jaswal, 35, who spoke to The Straits Times over the phone.

What concerned her most was that young students from nearby schools could easily read the graffiti on their way to and from school, she added. "If you put yourself in the shoes of a young Muslim or Malay student, the words would be very hurtful; you'd feel like you're being targeted and insulted, and that would make a real negative impact for someone who's just on their way

to school," Ms Jaswal said, describing the vandalism as a cowardly and sickening act.

A passer-by, who said he worked nearby and declined to be named, said yesterday that he had alerted police to the graffiti after spotting a young schoolboy looking at it.

A recent graduate of the Madrasah Aljunied Al-Islamiah school, who wanted to be known only as Ms Rasyidah, saw the graffiti for the first time yesterday morning. "I'm not personally offended by it, but others might be," said the 19-year-old.

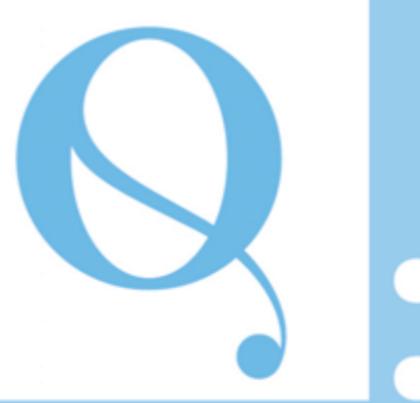
Criminal lawyer Sunil Sudheesan said that the perpetrator could face charges for vandalism, and for sedition.

If convicted, vandals can be fined up to \$2,000 or jailed for up to three years and given eight strokes of the cane. For sedition, first-time offenders could be fined up to \$5,000 and jailed for three years.

Police investigations are ongoing.

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Six injured after glass panel shatters at Jurong East foodcourt

Six people were injured when a glass panel shattered at the foodcourt of Icon@IBP in Jurong East.

According to Chinese daily Lianhe Wanbao, the six people who were injured were sitting at two tables near the glass panel when it broke on Thursday.

An eyewitness, Mr Liu Yi De, 27, told Wanbao that the person who was most severely injured was sitting closest to the glass panel when it broke. The victim suffered several cuts and wounds, Mr Liu added.

The Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) responded to the incident at 3A International Business Park Road at 12.25pm.

One person was taken to Ng Teng Fong General Hospital, SCDF said.

Mr Tan Yew Chin, chief executive for Singapore and South-east Asia at Ascendas-Singbridge, which manages Icon@IBP, confirmed that six people were injured.

One person was taken to hospital and was discharged on the same day, while the other five suffered minor injuries, he said. The building management is currently investigating the cause of the incident, he added.

"The safety of our tenants and visitors remains our utmost priority," said Mr Tan.

"We take this incident seriously and are following up with the affected people to ensure that their well-being is taken care of."

Choo Yun Ting



The shattered glass panel at the foodcourt of Icon@IBP. One person was taken to hospital and was discharged on the same day, while the other five suffered minor injuries. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

Man ordered to pay ex-wife \$6m after appeal

Apex court allows his appeal, reducing value of total matrimonial assets to \$35m

Cara Wong

The Court of Appeal has ordered a man to pay his former wife \$6 million after allowing his appeal in part to reduce the value of total matrimonial assets to \$35 million in their divorce settlement.

The woman is now entitled to about \$11.6 million worth of joint assets, including the matrimonial

home valued at \$3.95 million and other assets worth \$1.7 million.

This came after the Court of Appeal upheld a High Court judge's earlier decision that the couple's total matrimonial assets should be divided 67:33 in favour of the husband, who is a co-founder of a venture capital fund.

The woman had also appealed against the decision. In her case, she had sought to have the weighting between their direct and indirect contributions to their assets changed to 50:50, from the High Court judge's original weighting of 60:40, in favour of the husband.

According to judgment documents released on Thursday, the couple had been married for 17 years and have two children.

The woman, who had worked in senior executive roles at various banks, filed for divorce in September 2010 after the man unilaterally slashed the monthly maintenance for the family by a third to \$5,000.

She had found out in June that year that her husband had bought an apartment in Shanghai, with his mistress named as a joint owner.

Both of them appealed against a High Court decision in November 2017 to split their matrimonial assets, valued at \$38 million then, 67:33 in favour of the man.

In the latest ruling, the Court of Appeal, comprising High Court Justice Belinda Ang and Judges of Appeal Andrew Phang and Judith Prakash, found that the husband had acquired additional assets after November 2011, the month an interim judgment was granted.

This sum, amounting to \$6.1 million, should not have been included in the pool of matrimonial assets to be divided, the judges ruled.

However, as they found that the husband had not provided a full and frank disclosure of his assets, they valued the couple's assets at 10 per cent higher than the disclosed sum.

This ultimately contributed to the \$35 million sum, of which \$4.6 million was from the woman.

The court also ordered the man to pay his former wife \$11,000 every month for the maintenance of their children. He must also cover 75 per cent of the children's education expenses and the first child's growth hormone expenses.

His lawyers earlier contended that these expenses should be divided equally between him and his former wife. They also argued that the expenses the High Court judge had adopted for calculation of the maintenance sum were too high.

The "sheer amount of assets that the wife would receive from the division of assets makes it fair and equitable for both parties to share the children's expenses equally", his lawyers argued in court documents.

The three judges, however, saw no basis on which to overturn the High Court judge's decision.

"The division of the matrimonial assets should not be a consideration that affects the determination of maintenance for the children," the judges said in their judgment papers.

They also dismissed the rest of the appeals by the man and his former wife against the original High Court decision.

They ruled that none of their arguments warranted a change in the way their matrimonial assets was to be divided.

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The court also ordered the man to pay his former wife \$11,000 every month for the maintenance of their children. He must also cover 75 per cent of the children's education expenses and the first child's growth hormone expenses.

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Franjican's Take HIGHER NUMBER OF DENGUE CASES REPORTED



Meritocracy is about leading others, not winning

The purpose of meritocracy is to unite and not divide the people, to advance the common interest and not serve personal interests (Meritocracy and its toll on our students; Jan 9).

It is meant to raise the tide for all to achieve a better standard of living.

Therefore meritocracy should not be about winning, but instead be about leading others.

Focusing on winning creates a

zero-sum game, by forging ahead and achieving better results at the expense of others who are left behind.

On the other hand, leading is about playing a positive-sum game - leading others in the process of leading oneself.

It is about sharing the responsibility of helping others who may not enjoy the same advantages, and producing better results while reaching out to help others raise their levels.

There is no need for unhealthy competition and to always be ahead of others.

The end result of playing a positive-sum game is that both the leader and his team can accomplish more and make a more positive impact on the environment around them.

Effective and compassionate meritocracy is about recognising and honouring leaders who serve a greater good.

Patrick Liew Siew Gian (Dr)

Official statements should call a spade a spade

Reading the key findings from the Committee of Inquiry's (COI) investigation into the SingHealth cyber attack, I feel that the report could have used a more strongly worded description of why the breach took place (Probe report on SingHealth data breach points to basic failings; Jan 10).

The COI's findings can be summed up in two observations - complacency on the part of management, which believed that SingHealth was well-protected

against cyber attacks, and incompetence by the staff tasked with cyber security, who failed to do their jobs properly.

There seems to be a tendency for official statements, whether from government agencies or the private sector, to use words that make a situation seem less serious than it actually is.

The COI's report is one such example, as is the recent case of the SMRT worker who had to have his foot amputated after it was run over

by a maintenance train (SMRT worker was checking for oil leaks just before accident; Dec 22).

The official word from SMRT was that he was "injured", which would have given readers the impression that it was nothing serious.

Yes, harsh words hurt and nobody likes to hear or read negative news reports. But the only way for organisations and even the country to improve is to accept the hard truth and learn real lessons from it.

Gabriel Cheng Kian Tiong

SingHealth breach: No one taking responsibility

The almost blasé tone of the SingHealth group chief executive Ivy Ng comment to the Committee of Inquiry (COI) report was disappointing on several counts (Probe report on SingHealth data breach points to basic failings; Jan 10).

She said: "Since the incident, we have reinforced the culture of personal ownership of cyber defence so that every staff is empowered to identify and report cyber-security threats."

- Since the breach last year, little has been said by the board or the CEO.
- Doesn't the release of the report

warrant a press conference, so that the top management can field questions?

It is disconcerting that, notwithstanding public pronouncements, no one at the top appears to be taking responsibility, even with the damning COI statement that "the IT cyber-security team could not even recognise a security incident".

The public deserves a more substantive response from those at the top, with an outline of the specifics of the steps that have been taken since the reported incident.

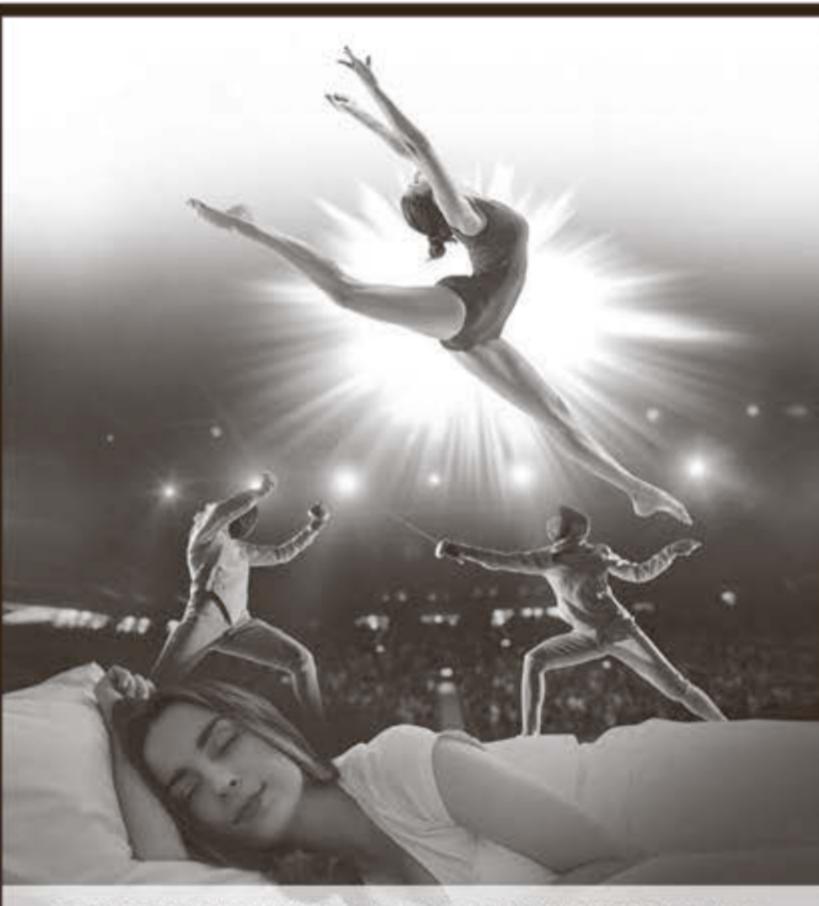
Danny Chow

FORUM ONLINE

1. LETTERS OF THE WEEK: Go online to see this week's top three picks.

2. PROFESSOR SATTAR BAWANY: Educate employees on cyber security.

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THE RAFFLES CONVERSATION

KEVIN MANDIA CEO of FireEye

Today in **THE BUSINESS TIMES WEEKEND**

Social services don't necessarily replace support networks

Less-privileged Singaporeans should be respected as individuals capable of making decisions for their households, and not regarded as people with problems.

I agree with Mr Gerard Ee's argument that the design of Singapore's social service ecosystem can be improved by creating an environment of mutual help (Stop seeing people as problems. They're assets who build social capital; Jan 3).

Yet, it is not necessarily true that programmes and services offered by the social and community service sector – and by extension, the work of social workers – replace "natural support networks" or "the notion of a caring community".

First, even in his positive examples of asset- and community-based approaches, Mr Ee would be hard-pressed to identify instances when social workers were not involved in planning and conceptualisation, in facilitation and in nudging initial involvement.

This makes the question not about whether the proliferation of social workers is positive or not, or whether what they provide competes with pre-existing support

networks or communities, but, rather, how they should be engaged.

Second, Mr Ee may overestimate the extent to which the general Singaporean public is willing to commit time, effort and money to these causes.

Mr Ee calls upon neighbours, families, friends and constituents to be mobilised as "front-line responders" for those who may be going through a rough patch. Yet, the critical question of how to do so was left unanswered.

The latest Individual Giving Survey by the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre found that only 35 per cent of Singaporeans volunteered in 2016, and this phenomenon – if I may hypothesise – could be the result of inadequate social mixing across dissimilar socio-economic backgrounds, the pragmatic emphasis on individual merit and the many commitments that the average Singaporean has to juggle.

Yet, even if this chicken-and-egg problem of community identity and engagement is resolved, the social workers of Singapore will remain an important piece of the puzzle.

Kwan Jin Yao

Teach co-op society model in schools

I had a pleasant experience at a newly opened coffee shop in Sembawang. In addition to having a nice breakfast, several other details stood out to me.

First, it had a dedicated charging point, which is not typical of a neighbourhood coffee shop.

Second, there were discounts offered for opting for healthier

options, such as less sugar.

Third, the prices were about 30 per cent lower than other coffee shops nearby, yet I could find no compromise on quality or quantity.

Fourth, the employees are Singaporeans, which is heart-warming given the prickly debate on the hiring of foreign workers over Singaporeans.

I found out that this coffee shop is managed by NTUC Foodfare and run under a cooperative model, and would like to commend them on doing a good job.

The world does not become a better place when businesses are driven solely by profit at the expense of social good.

Cooperatives such as those run by

NTUC have shown that it is possible to run sustainable enterprises while doing social good.

Perhaps this is the way forward for businesses in the future, and a good place to start would be to teach students the concept of cooperative societies in public schools.

David Lee

Revamp cleaning, security industries to help elderly workers

Many elderly workers are no longer able to do their existing jobs as efficiently as they used to, so despite a willingness to accept lower pay, many cannot be taken on (Panellists discuss ways to help older workers; Jan 10).

They therefore have to move to other industries, like the cleaning

industry which often only the elderly are willing to join.

Yet, no one has really tried to make the job easier for the elderly without sacrificing efficiency and productivity.

Henry Ford was able to break car assembly down into small specialised tasks so that even

housewives could produce cars, but this has not happened yet in the cleaning industry.

Private security is another industry that the elderly could work in. But internal squabbling and the bullying of older workers by younger employees has apparently scared many away. The situation is also not

helped by the Police Licensing and Regulatory Department's stringent industry rules.

So until there is a revamp of the cleaning and private security industries, we will still see fewer elderly workers and a heavier reliance on foreign workers.

Wee Sin Chuan

On Facebook

Should popular music be politically correct?

We shouldn't need to be politically correct at all. If someone or something offends you, walk away. I think that's something we have all forgotten as adults.

Jackson Lee

Political correctness can sometimes go overboard, but if you think that means it should be dismissed entirely as people being "too easily offended", then you are making the mistake of throwing

the baby out with the bathwater.

Liu INan

I have never taken certain pop songs seriously. They do not deserve to be taken seriously.

Benjamin Chew

Is an outright ban on plastic bags too extreme a move?

Why does the solution always have to be an outright ban? Can't we be persuaded through public education?

Harry Chia

Instead of banning plastic bags, why not reward customers who use their own bags?

Susan Khoo

If you're going to sell the bags anyway, what's the point? If plastic is still going to end up in the landfill, there is no environmental benefit to banning plastic bags. It's just a cheap gimmick. And unlike many countries that have banned plastic bags, we have high-rise garbage chutes. Is there an alternative to plastic bags?

Haziq Rosli

Electricity retailers have to comply with PDPA

We thank Mr Sim Eng Cheong for his letter (Ensure electricity suppliers' registration complies with PDPA; Dec 31, 2018).

Electricity retailers are required to comply with the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) when handling the personal data of their customers.

The Energy Market Authority (EMA) has reminded all electricity retailers, including Senoko Energy, to ensure compliance with the PDPA.

In addition, electricity retailers are required to conduct fair marketing and contracting practices in accordance with EMA's Code of Conduct for Retail Electricity Licensees.

Dorcas Tan
Director
Market Development & Surveillance Department
Energy Market Authority

Why Raffles flanked by statues of only men

We thank Ms Margaret Thomas for her views in her Forum letter (Mark women's contributions for S'pore bicentennial; Jan 9).

For the project in which we installed additional statues to stand alongside that of Sir Stamford Raffles, we used the years

1299 and 1819 as points of reference.

The year 1299 was the beginning of the Singapura Kingdom, and 1819 was a key turning point when Raffles arrived.

The latter year was also significant for many other arrivals,

Hence, we featured individuals who came to Singapore that year and made an impact.

We did consider tradeswoman and philanthropist Hajjah Fatimah. However, we could not find records that confirmed that she, or other notable female contributors,

had arrived in 1819.

Having said that, these statues are but a fraction of the larger cast of contributors and the first of many projects to come from the Singapore Bicentennial Office and our partners this year.

These projects and many more from the community will feature the women who made a difference as we consider the diverse range of

people and episodes that marked our evolution.

We hope the public will continue to participate actively in the Singapore Bicentennial with ideas and insights as we reflect on our 700-year journey from Singapore to Singaporean.

Gene Tan
Executive Director
Singapore Bicentennial Office

THE STRAITS TIMES Wins big at the Asian Digital Media Awards 2018

The Straits Times won several awards at the Asian Digital Media Awards 2018. The awards and their descriptions are as follows:

- BEST IN LIFESTYLE, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT WEBSITE OR MOBILE SERVICES (GOLD)**: **Asia's Sacred Art**. ST's first augmented reality project showcases artefacts of Asian deities on display at Singapore's Asian Civilisations Museum.
- BEST IN SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT (SILVER)**: **What's Good**. The Facebook group was set up to promote positive journalism by encouraging users to share news of meaningful deeds.
- BEST NEWS WEBSITE (SILVER)**: **No One Dies Alone**. The project, told through words, photos and videos, documents the last days of a cancer patient and the volunteers who accompanied him to the end.
- BEST INNOVATION TO ENGAGE YOUTH AUDIENCE (BRONZE)**: **Game Of \$urvival**. The interactive game was part of ST's coverage of the Budget this year. It invites users to pick a character and navigate their financial decisions.
- BEST INNOVATION TO ENGAGE YOUTH AUDIENCE (GOLD) AND BEST READER REVENUE INITIATIVE (SILVER)**: **NewsEd**. ST content and news articles are curated in an app and online portal for students to learn about current affairs, and for educators to create teaching guides.
- BEST READER REVENUE INITIATIVE (BRONZE)**: **ST Premium**. The initiative launched in February this year focuses on producing exclusive stories, first-hand reporting and opinion pieces for subscribers.
- BEST DIGITAL NEWS START-UP (BRONZE)**: **The ST Asia Report**. The magazine and newsletter provide readers highlights of ST correspondents' reportage across the region. There is also a dedicated Facebook page.
- BEST DIGITAL NEWS START-UP (BRONZE)**: **Memories In Sydney**. The integrated marketing campaign, complete with photos and videos, zooms in on what to see and eat in the Australian city.

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ST PHOTO: RAJ NADARAJAN

Jostling for luck

Worshippers jostling to be the first to place joss sticks into the urn at Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple in Waterloo Street at the stroke of midnight on Feb 10, 2013. This Chinese New Year practice is believed to bring luck and prosperity.

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Treat yourself to CNY goodies at M Hotel

Spending Chinese New Year at M Hotel is cheaper for SPH Rewards members, with a 25 per cent discount off Chinese New Year goodies for reservations made by Jan 31.

If you are planning a festive buffet, you can choose Cafe 2000's Bountiful Seafood and Barbecue spread (from \$88), or The Buffet

restaurant's Eight Treasures Premium Steamboat (from \$95).

At Cafe 2000, highlights include a lavish seafood selection, and a whole roast suckling pig.

At The Buffet restaurant, you can cook your seafood in the hearty Eight Treasures premium broth.

There are also three yusheng

choices you can order as a dine-in item or takeaway. Choices include Auspicious Smoked Salmon, Abundance Abalone and Three Treasures Yusheng (from \$58).

Terms and conditions apply, and the discount is not applicable to the Double Happiness and Triple Happiness combos.



Feast on a lavish spread at M Hotel, with 25 per cent off goodies like The Buffet restaurant's Eight Treasures Premium Steamboat. PHOTO: M HOTEL SINGAPORE

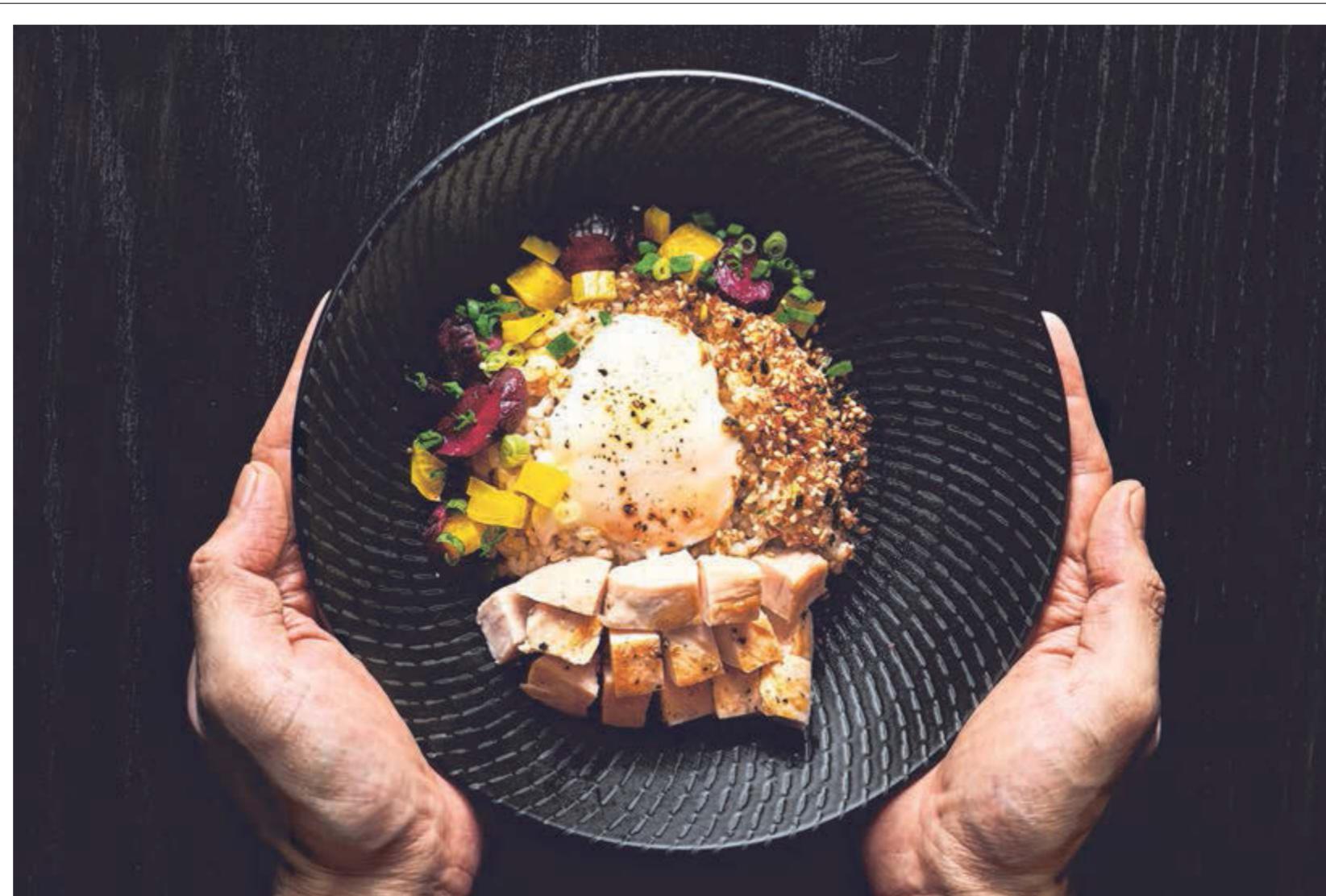
Tuck into customised meals at an exclusive price at Wafuken

Wafuken is a restaurant best known for using the sous vide cooking method extensively, and you will have a chance to try the food at a special price.

Sous vide is a modern cooking technique which involves vacuum-sealing food in a bag, then slow-cooking it to a very precise temperature in a water bath.

All meals at Wafuken, with outlets at Asia Square Tower 2 and OUE Downtown Gallery, are customisable. Pick your choice of sous vide cooked protein (chicken, beef, smoked duck, fish or prawns), then add your sides and carbohydrates to complete your meal. Visit www.wafuken.com for the menu and pricing. And just for SPH subscribers, enjoy a 20 per cent discount for walk-in orders.

Flash your SPH Rewards e-card to enjoy the offer. The offer ends on Feb 13. Terms and conditions apply.



The Wafuken Chicken Breast Bowl. Wafuken is a restaurant best known for using the sous vide cooking method extensively. Flash your SPH Rewards e-card to indulge in a customisable meal at a 20 per cent discount for walk-in orders. The offer ends on Feb 13. PHOTO: WAFUKEN

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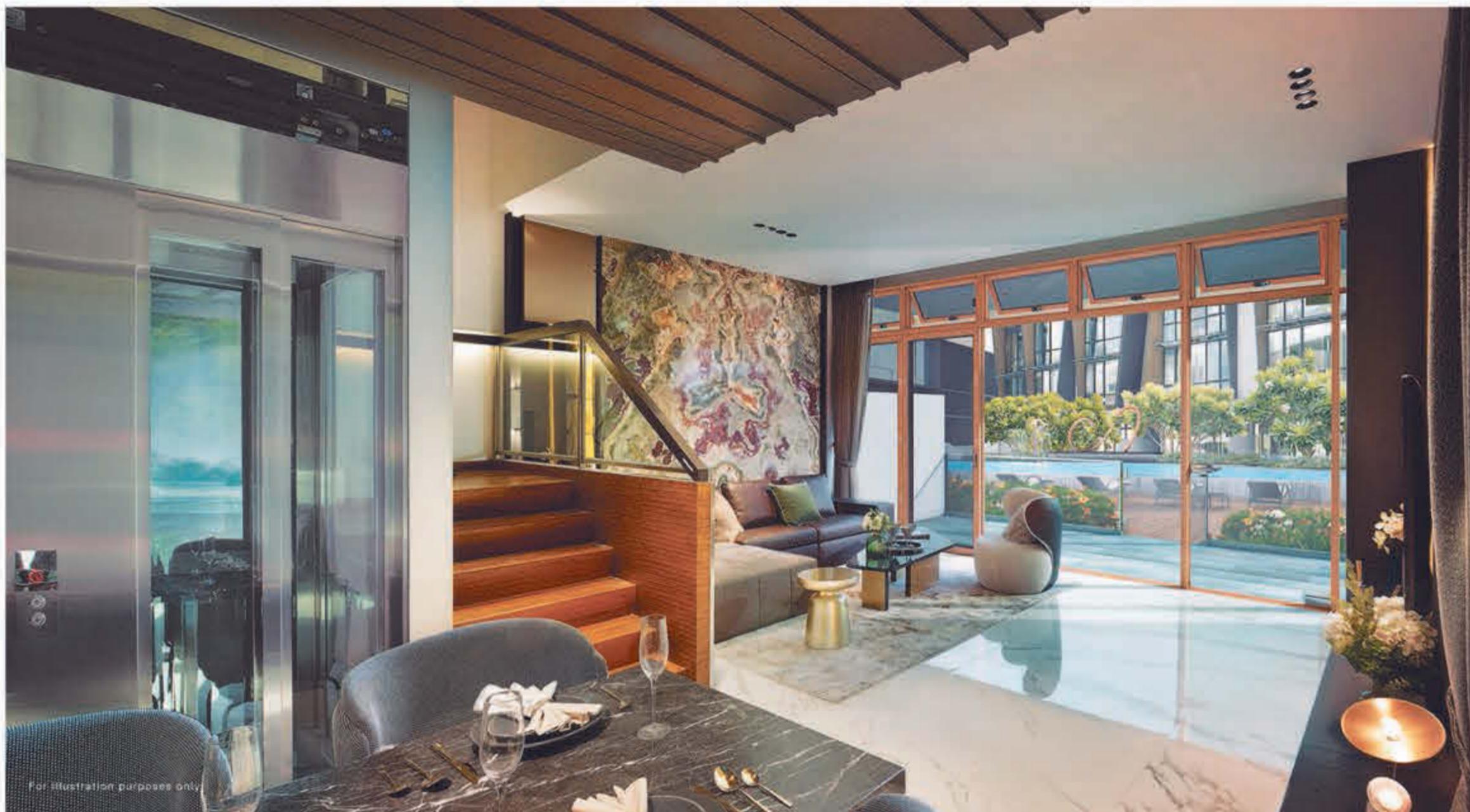
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a new conversation +

Happy New Year!

As we welcome 2019, we invite you to ask yourself: how can I create the best living space for me and my family?

This question shapes our inaugural issue of H+. Formerly known as Home&Now, H+ celebrates our habitats – the spaces in which we find rest, entertain friends, and spend quality time with our loved ones.

What will unfold in the property sector over the next six months? What are experts saying about planning your home shopping finances? Are you enjoying ideal Wi-Fi connection? Is your living space on-trend in terms of decor?

These are some of the conversations we have in this issue.

And since your living space is about you, we want to know what inspirations you would like to enjoy, and the ideas you would love us to share. Tell us on www.sweetspot.straitstimes.com/h-plus/ and be part of a growing community of home owners who can access marketplace information, industry insights and lifestyle options that celebrate modern living at its best.

Enjoy.

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Living your best life

Qingjian Realty's award-winning properties Le Quest and JadeScape will redefine modern living for you and your family

BY MICHELLE CHIN

A contemporary living space offering all the comforts of home that is complemented by modern technology makes all the difference between an enviable lifestyle versus one where daily inconveniences are part of your day.

That's why your choice of a good home extends beyond its location and facilities — it is also about thoughtful design that makes modern living stress-free for your family.

Qingjian Realty's award-winning properties Le Quest and JadeScape tick all the boxes to achieve this.

Modern living

A mixed-use development, Le Quest is a 99-year leasehold condominium at Bukit Batok West with 516 residential units. It is directly linked to retail outlets, a mall, a supermarket and a food court on the first floor and a childcare centre on the third floor.

On weekdays, you can enjoy less frantic mornings and a home-cooked breakfast before you send your toddler to the childcare centre, and still have time for a morning swim at the 50m lap pool. To make your commute to work, hop on a free bus shuttle service to Bukit Batok MRT Station.

En route to picking up your toddler from the childcare centre after the workday, access the smart home app hilife. The Smart Home Gateway allows you to set your home's desired lighting and air-conditioning temperature so you arrive to an ambience-friendly, pre-cooled space that allows

you to leverage life's little conveniences.

hilife also features a suite of facility management and lifestyle services such as checking the availability of and booking the condominium's function room for next month's barbecue with friends and family. Skip washing the dishes by grabbing dinner at the Koufu Food Court or other restaurants on the first floor, so you have more time for TV and bedtime stories before calling it a night.

Smart living at your fingertips

Similarly, JadeScape, a 99-year leasehold condominium near Marymount MRT Station, puts the conveniences of modern living at your fingertips for quality weekends.

Singapore's first fully-smart private development, it features a selection of one- to five-bedroom units, a mall, a supermarket and a food court on the first floor and a childcare centre on the third floor.

Wake up leisurely to your favourite music station on the smart voice control speaker. A hot shower awaits with the heat recovery system having recycled the excess heat from last night's airconditioning for your morning shower. Have your shot of espresso and pull up the hilife app on your smartphone to pay for your facility booking and also register your friends' visit later in the evening.

As you head out for a casual breakfast at Shunfu Mart across the street and return home again for a lazy afternoon, facial recognition technology at the lift lobby and fingerprint scanning at your door enhances the seamless transition for you. And when your friends arrive at sunset for your pre-arranged dinner at Zen Pavilion, they can let

themselves into the property with a pre-assigned QR code. This removes the hassle of manually giving their particulars at the guard house.

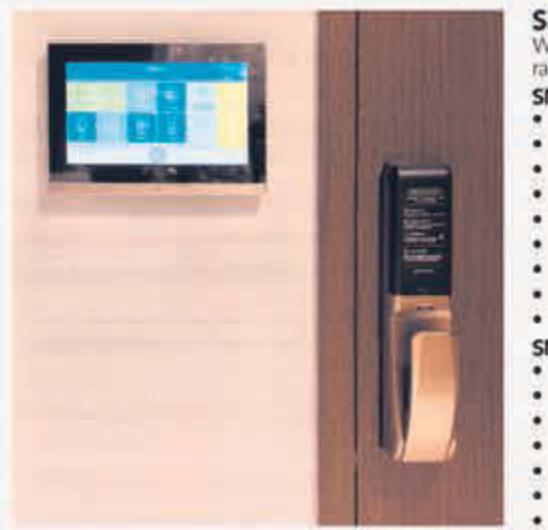
Award-winning pioneer in design and innovations

Both developments offer fresh, modern interiors with thoughtfully designed fittings and features such as maximum storage space with full-height bedroom wardrobes, and magic corner storage in kitchen cabinets providing additional space for all your groceries. JadeScape also provides a smart water purifier to promote health and wellness, and an integrated dishwasher for quick clean-ups. Luxurious branded provisions also ensure style meets comfort in every home.

Le Quest and JadeScape's offerings build on Qingjian Realty's previous projects, including executive condominium The Visionnaire which has set the bar for smart homes in Singapore since 2016, and Bellwoods, an executive condominium with versatile living spaces and a pre-designed space parcel called CoSpace, which can be flexibly transformed into an entertainment suite, small home office or nursery.

In promoting modern liveability, Qingjian Realty has clinched a string of awards such as the Best Developer award, Best Mixed Use Development category (Le Quest) and Best Smart Building (JadeScape) at the 2018 PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards (Singapore).

Visit www.lequest.com.sg and www.jadescape.com.sg for details.



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*Smart provisions differ for Le Quest and JadeScape.



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

LE QUEST (TOP: 2021)

Bukit Batok Street 41

Units available: 516

Nearest MRT Station: Bukit Batok

Average PSF: \$1,400



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

JADESCAPE (TOP: 2023)

Shunfu Road

Units available: 1,206

Nearest MRT Station: Marymount

Average PSF: \$1,700

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青建地产旗下获奖的开发项目“心乐轩”(Le Quest)与“顺福轩”(JadeScape)将重新定义你与家人的摩登生活。

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现代生活

作为一个99年地契的综合发展项目，位于武吉巴督西的“心乐轩”拥有516个住宅单位，与一楼的零售商店、商场、超市和食阁及三楼的托儿所直接相连。平日，你可以在送孩子去托儿所前，享受悠闲的早晨和一顿家常早餐，甚至仍有时间可以在50米标准游泳池里游泳，再搭乘免费接驳巴士前往武吉巴督地铁站通勤上班。

在一天的忙碌工作后，你可以到托儿所接回你的孩子，并启动智能家居应用hilife。智能家居让你能够控制家中的照明度和空调温度，让你回到一个温馨凉爽的空间，让你可以享受生活中的小小便利。

hilife智能家居应用程序还提供一系列设施管理和服务，例如预订下个月与亲朋好友一起的烧烤聚餐的公寓的活动室。到口福食阁或一楼的其他餐厅享用晚餐，省去洗碗的家务，腾出更多的时间看电视或成为自己的孩子读睡前故事。

智能主导生活

同样的，“顺福轩”——靠近玛丽蒙地铁站的99年地契公寓，让你可以轻松享受现代生活的便利，度过优质周末。

作为新加坡首个采纳智能住宅管理系统的住宅项目，“顺福轩”涵盖一卧房至五卧房单位，以及两个顶层单位。

通过智能语音控制扬声器悠闲地让你最爱的音乐电台唤醒你，热回收系统从昨晚空凋中回收多余的热量让你享受一场热水淋浴。喝完咖啡后，打开手机上的hilife应用程序，支付你预订的设施，并为晚上将到访的朋友进行保安注册。

你到对面的顺福市场享用悠闲早餐并回家度过慵懒的午后时光，电梯大堂的面部识别技术开门口的指纹扫描系统为你提供无缝衔接。当你的朋友在日落时到达Zen Pavilion准备与你一起享用預先安排的晚餐时，他们可以通过预先传给他们的二维码自行进入公寓，省去到警卫室登记个人信息的麻烦。

建筑设计及创新屡获大奖的先驱

两个开发项目都提供清新、现代的室内设计，配以精心设计的配件和设备。如能促进健康和保健的智能净水器、一个能快速清洁的集成洗碗机，高大的卧室衣柜和厨房储存杂货的魔术仓位，给你最大的存储空间。豪华品牌的设施也确保每个家庭风格突出，环境舒适。

青建地产在过去成功的基本上打造了“心乐轩”与“顺福轩”。这些项目包括2016年本地首个融入智慧系统的执行共管公寓“品尚居”(The Visionnaire)及拥有多功能生活空间的“百丽居”(Bellwoods)，而“横空间”(CoSpace)设计让屋主可根据各自的居住需求，将单位中的一个特定空间改造为娱乐套房、小型家庭办公室或育婴室。

在推广现代宜居方面，青建地产在2018年度PropertyGuru亚洲房地产大奖(新加坡)中获得了一系列大奖，包括最佳开发商、最佳综合发展项目(“心乐轩”)与最佳智能建筑(“顺福轩”)。

请登录www.lequest.com.sg或www.jadescape.com.sg了解更多详情。

BY CORINNE KERK

What a year 2018 was for property. After four straight quarters of higher private residential prices, the Government introduced cooling measures in July to curtail the exuberance of the market and allow prices to grow at a sustainable rate.

Meanwhile, a slew of new private condominium launches following previous successful en bloc and government land sales were greeting home buyers, who were bowled over by their stunning showflats, innovative features and numerous facilities.

They were not, however, as impressed with the direction homes were heading — mostly towards the smaller end of the scale.

Then lo and behold, new guidelines were announced in October to reduce the maximum number of units allowed in new private housing projects in the heartlands.

These were meant to lessen the cumulative effect new developments could pose to local infrastructure, as well as

对 本地房地产市场而言，2018年可谓“惊喜连连”！

继私宅价格连续四个季度攀升后，政府在去年7月推出新一轮降温措施，以抑制房价的涨势，确保楼市得以持续稳健增长。

与此同时，早前成功出售的集体项目和政府售地的全新楼盘也陆续推出市场。美轮美奂的示范单位、富有创意和完善的设施和特色，令买家为之倾倒。

然而，买家对私宅单位面积越建越小的趋势也不敢苟同。

出乎市场意料的，市区重建局在去年10月推出三个针对非地住宅的新指导原则，包括限制中央区以外私宅项目的单位数量，旨在避免

encourage developers to provide a more balanced mix of unit sizes.

New guidelines to limit the size of balconies, as well as a bonus allowance for indoor communal spaces, were also announced shortly after. These will come into effect on Jan 17.

It is a little too early to determine the full effects these have had on the private residential property market, but there have been some aftershocks for sure.

For instance, The Straits Times has reported how experts have been surprised by the severity of the new property curbs, with reactions ranging from regulations being described as “a sledgehammer to kill a fly”, to concerns about a sales momentum freefall and subdued sales volumes for the months ahead.

How exactly will these impact private property this year, and what else can we expect?

We speak to industry experts so you can be better prepared when property hunting in the months ahead.

当地基础设施负荷压力过大，以及鼓励发展商提供更均衡的单位组合。

至于限制阳台面积和鼓励发展商增设室内休闲空间的楼面红利计划，将于今年1月17日生效。

这些措施将如何冲击私宅市场，目前尚言之过早，但坊间早已对此议论纷纷。

例如，接受本地报章访问的专家都对政府如此重拳出击大感意外，有些更把这些举措形容为“杀鸡用牛刀”，甚至是预计私宅销量将开始走下坡。

究竟政府出台的这些新措施将如何影响本地私宅市场，我们又能期待些什么？

本报特别请教业内人士，请他们为计划在今年进场买楼的你指点迷津。

楼市新趋势

Hello, 2019

How Singapore's property landscape could break new ground

新年新气象，本地房地产市场在新的一年将有何发展？



3

NOW TRENDING 本地最潮的设计风

key looks

- Memphis-style aesthetics (a 70s Italian style heavy on colourful geometrics);
- Customised materials like broken tile flooring and colour-stained timber;
- Statement ceilings

Explains Mr Wong Ker How, partner of Asolidplan and Solid Architects: “People are bored with the usual materials and designing just four walls and the floor.”

Asolidplan及Solid Architects合伙人王克豪预计，接下来走俏的包括：孟菲斯式美学（Memphis-style aesthetics，盛行于上世纪70年代的意大利美学，多采用碰撞的色彩和几何图案）、定制化材料的选用（破碎的瓷砖地板、自修复合成压板）以及特色天花板。

王克豪解释说：“人们对经常看到、触摸到或使用的材料已经习以为常，而设计一个房间里的五个表面（四面墙和一个地板），也无法让他们产生新鲜感。”

Innovative designs for small spaces

Home designs must make strata space feel more spacious despite the smaller unit footprints, says Mr Lee Wai Fong, director and head of the Residential Typology Group at DP Architects.

To achieve this, add features such as higher ceilings, corner windows, full-height window openings, open kitchens and high-rise planters.

Certain functions such as storage, a laundry/dryer, and parts of the kitchen and study room can also be transferred out of apartments into communal amenities to make more room.

This is especially relevant for smaller units, as tenants, singles and young couples

are more predisposed towards co-living and do not mind sharing such amenities.

适用于小空间的创新设计

由于土地价格越来越贵，房子也越建越小。DP Architects董事李炜芳表示，虽然现在的单位面积更小了，但房屋设计必须让住户觉得分层空间比实际面积来得更宽敞。挑高的天花板、角窗、落地窗、开放式厨房、花槽等，皆可让狭小的空间感觉更宽敞。

原本设在屋内的储藏室、洗衣机/烘干机、厨房、书房等，也可移到单位外，成为公共设施，不占据屋内的空间。

这尤其适合较小型单位的用户，如租户、单身人士或年轻夫妻等。他们比较能接受“共同生活”（co-living）的概念，也不介意共用设施。

Homes get smarter

The adoption of smart home technology has picked up over the past year, and the trend is set to grow.

Increasingly, tech-savvy home buyers are being offered a greater variety of smart products by more providers, in particular home security and automation options, which have become the new standards for convenient modern living.

For instance, in its design for a bungalow on Sentosa, interior design agency The I.D. Dept catered for a European Installation Bus system that integrates lighting, audio, air-conditioning and even control of windows to create “scenes” in different settings.

Imagine daytime and night-time scenes that can be programmed via a single switch that immediately sets the lighting, temperature and sunlight control. Genius.

智慧家居

近一年来，越来越多新项目采纳智能家居科技，预料这将日渐成为一股潮流。

市面上也有更多商家为科技通买家提供琳琅满目的智能产品，尤其是家居保安、自动化功能，



已经成为现代生活的标准配备。

以圣淘沙的一栋洋房为例，室内设计公司The I.D. Dept在装潢房子时加入了整合灯光、音响、空调甚至是窗户以打造不同“场景”的EIB系统（European Installation Bus）。这是一种分散式的开放系统，可以控制和管理设施内的电子装置。

只要一个开关，便可调控灯光、温度和采光，营造白天或夜晚的景色，是不是很棒？



THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME 创建品牌形象

Environment-led condo themes

There is a general trend towards imbuing a sense of permanence with names that stand the test of time, says Mr Emeric Lau, senior brand consultant at brand engagement consultancy Immortal.

Trend drivers include:

- Nature — think Singapore's Garden City status
- The history and heritage of the area
- Unique design elements
- Design style
- Architect association

除了空间规划之外，发展商预料也会在品牌上下功夫。

品牌咨询公司Immortal高级品牌顾问刘国安表示，未来的发展项目将继续以提高环保意识为主题。

这些灵感可能源自新加坡是个花园城市，或该发展地段的历史、相关名称等。发展商也可能以设计元素、设计风格或负责操刀的名设计师为主题。

总的来说，接下来的整体趋势是借助经得起时间考验的称谓，赋予有关项目永恒感。

Possibly cheaper price tags

- Higher additional buyer's stamp duty
- Tighter loan-to-value limits on residential property purchases
- Stock market turbulence
- Changing interest rates
- The fall-out from the trade war between the United States and China

These factors will affect property purchases, and buyers will accept them as the new normal says Mr Nicholas Mak, executive director at ZACD Group. Developers will probably bid less for land, and home owners will have to accept a slightly lower land price. The flipside? The cost of a replacement unit may also be moderated. However, this situation could take years to materialise, he adds.

私宅价格或下行

随着去年出台的新指导原则，发展商在竞标土地时预料将更谨慎，这或许会让集体出售项目的卖家失望。

为了达到市场平衡，卖家得接受较低的价格，而替代单位的价格也将趋缓。不过，麦俊荣认为，这或许要在若干年后才可能实现。

他相信，新实施的更高额外买方印花税和较低的私宅贷款与估值比例上限，将逐渐被买家接受为本地买房的新常规。

除此之外，宏观因素如股票市场的走势、利率走向、中美贸易战的发展等将对今年的楼市发挥更大的影响。

Say bye to balconies

告别阳台

In Singapore, balconies tend to be used for drying clothes and new units have little space for a washing machine or to air-dry laundry. There are people who don't want a balcony, especially for the 1- to 2-bedders. If your unit is very small, you don't want dead space and a balcony that is not fully utilised becomes a dead space.

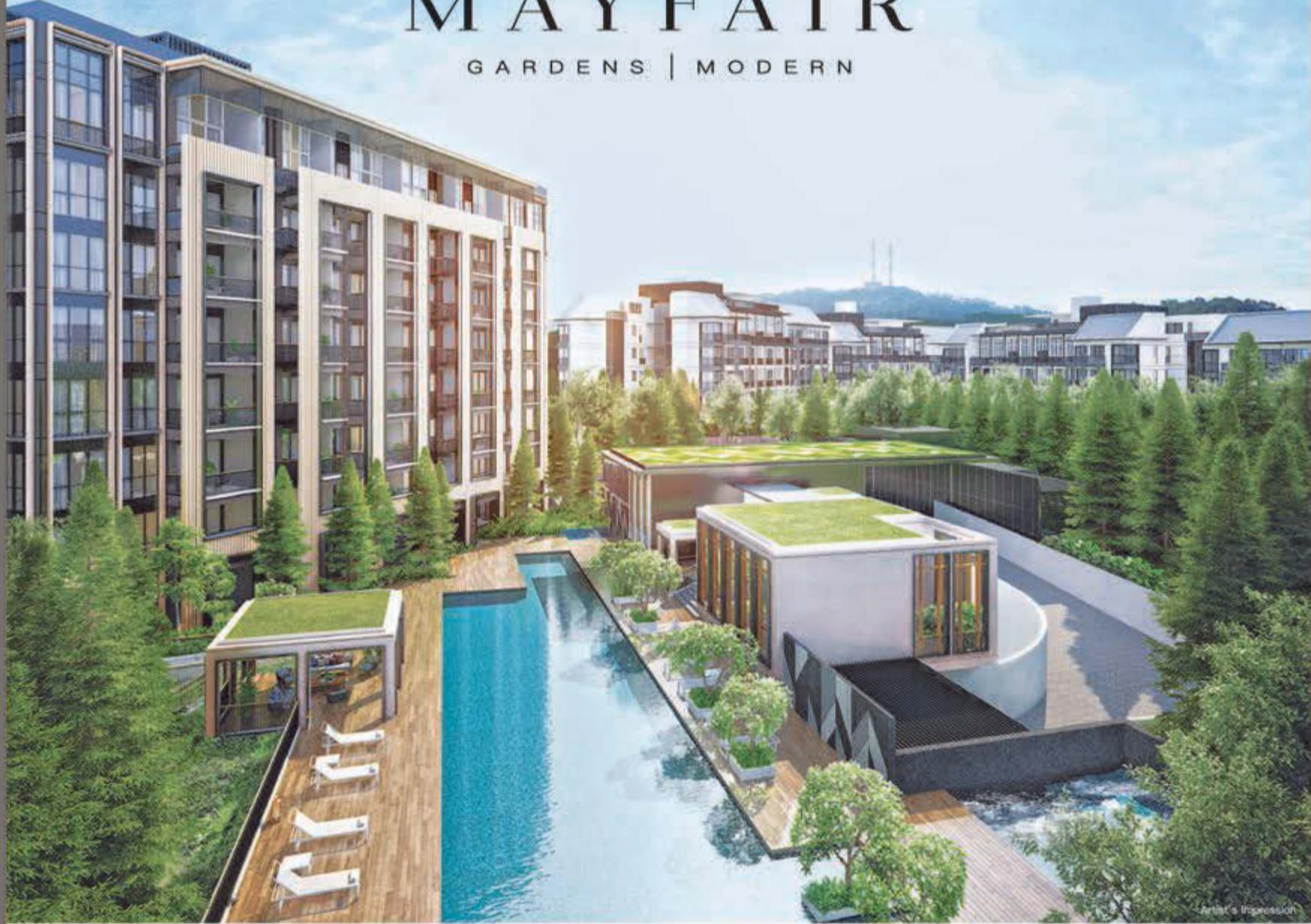
在新加坡，很多新房子没有足够空间可以放置洗衣机或晾衣服，因此阳台经常被用来当晾衣台。有些屋子，例如一或二房式的屋主，宁愿选择不要阳台。但你的屋子非常小时，你不会希望屋子出现“死角”，而没有充分利用的阳台就会沦为“死角”。

Mr Nicholas Mak,
executive director, ZACD Group
麦俊荣，杰地集团执行董事

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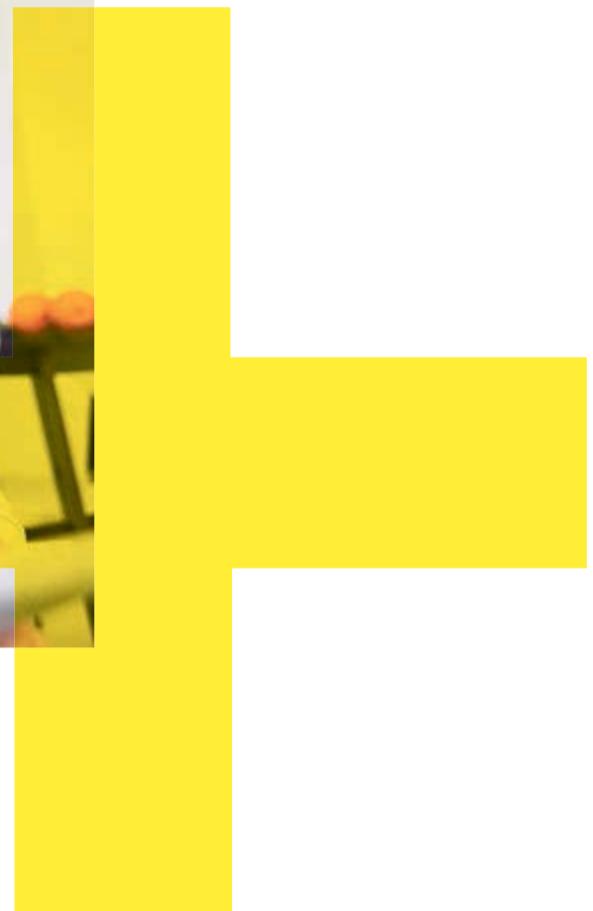
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Choice districts identified

Savills Singapore's Mr Cheong believes desirable locations will include Sim Lian's project (formerly Tampines Court), and CapitaLand and City Development Limited's joint-venture development at Sengkang Central.

ZACD Group's Mak expects prime districts 9, 10 and 11, as well as the east coast and north-east, which have seen many en bloc sales, to generate excitement through new launches.

多种选择

推出霸级私宅项目的发展商一般都会以其地理位置作为卖点，第一太平戴维斯的张敏璋认为，这就包括森联集团在原为淡滨尼阁（Tampines Court）地段发展的聚宝园（Treasures at Tampines），以及凯德集团和城市发展联手开发的盛港中心地段。

杰地集团的麦俊荣则预计，包括第9、10、11邮区在内的中央区，以及涌现集体出售热潮的东海岸及东北部地区，会有不少新项目陆续登场，带热市场。

Changing use of space

With co-living and co-housing gaining popularity, DP Architects' Mr Lee says developers and designers will push boundaries to find a balance between communal and privacy.

This would particularly be so for apartments in mature estates, where there are typically more young working adults and retired or retiring parents.

改变空间的用途

DP Architects的李炜芳表示，随着“共同生活”和“共居”（co-housing）概念的普及，发展商和设计师将致力于在“公用性”和“隐私”之间取得平衡。

这个问题在成熟区尤其显著，因为成熟区一般有较多年轻上班族和退休长者。

More communal facilities to enjoy

Mr Alan Cheong, senior director of research and consultancy at global real estate service provider Savills Singapore, foresees a rise in the number of bells and whistles as a standard offering among new condominium properties.

And with the bonus allowance for indoor communal spaces, more indoor recreational spaces are expected — hello squash or badminton courts, saunas, and multi-purpose or games rooms!

更多共用设施

国际房地产服务公司第一太平戴维斯（Savills）资深董事张敏璋预计，未来会有更多公寓项目把现在被视为花里胡哨的设施纳入标准配套中。

随着楼面红利计划的推出，发展商预计将增设室内休闲空间，一些已经被淘汰的设施如网球场、羽毛球场、桑拿房、多用途或游戏室可能重现。

Stay with Grandma and Grandpa

With more seniors continuing to stay physically and financially independent, DP Architects believes elder-friendly homes will gain popularity. These homes will only be built in suburban locations, says Mr Mak.

和爷爷奶奶同住

随着本地人口老化，以及乐龄人士在退休后仍然维持经济独立的活跃生活，DP Architects相信亲年长者的房屋将逐渐增加，并获得买家青睐。

不过，杰地集团（ZACD Group）执行总监麦俊荣指出，这些单位只会建在市区以外的地段，而不是靠近市区的地方，因为后者比较受年轻买家欢迎。

Fewer and bigger units per development

面积更大，数量更少

There will be bigger unit sizes when the new guidelines kick in on Jan 17 and the maximum number of housing units allowed in a development outside the central area is reduced. But in practical terms, most of the launches in 2019 won't be affected by the revised guidelines. Changes will be observed only from the fourth quarter of 2019.

市建局的新指导原则在1月17日生效后，单位的面积将会更大，中央区以外的发展项目的单位数量将受到限制。但大部分2019年推出的计划将不受影响，新指导原则对市场的影响或许要到今年第四季方可看到。

Mr Alan Cheong, senior director of research and consultancy, Savills Singapore
张敏璋，第一太平戴维斯

Post-en bloc buying and selling patterns

What will en bloc-ers do with their millions? For owner-occupiers, it depends on the en bloc proceeds they receive and where they prefer to live.

ZACD Group's Mr Mak notes that in recent collective sales where developments sold were privatised HUDC projects, sellers received between \$1 million and \$2.5 million each.

With that, empty nesters could buy a 99-year leasehold condominium unit. But since a private property would likely be smaller and represent a downgrade, others may buy five-room or executive Housing Board flats and keep some money in the bank.

Savills Singapore's Mr Cheong says many others — particularly investors — are waiting to buy another private property, since those who have tasted the fruit of collective sales tend to want to purchase private property again.

Seniors may downgrade to public housing and pass the surplus funds to their children to buy private property, preferably one with en bloc potential 10 to 15 years down the road.

集体出售后的买卖模式

获得集体出售赔偿金后，屋主选择购买哪类住宅？这要视他们所获的赔偿数额和个人偏爱而定。

麦俊荣说，近期的集体出售项目中有好几个私有化中等入息公寓(HUDC)，卖家一般各可获得一百万至250万。

这笔钱足以购买一个99年地契的公寓单位。但私人住宅空间一般较小，犹如“降级”，因此一些人可能会购买5房或执行组屋单位，然后把其余的钱存进银行。

Savills的张敏璋说，许多人尤其是投资者，都在等待时机购买私人住宅。那些已尝过集体出售甜头的屋主一般都还想再购买私人房产。

年长者可能转向公共住屋，将额外的数额拿给孩子购买私人住宅，尤其是那些在10至15年后具有集体出售潜能的房子。



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许光俊, Mortgage Supermart私人客户服务执行董事

One mortgage type to rule them all

哪种贷款最受落

With the continuing uptrend in interest rates, we are likely to see more borrowers opting for fixed rate packages to lock in the lower rates now and hedge against future interest rate hikes.

随着利率上升趋势的延续，我们可能会看到更多借款人选择固定利率配套，以锁定现在较低的利率和对冲未来的加息。

Mr Keff Hui, director of Private Client Services, Mortgage Supermart
许光俊, Mortgage Supermart私人客户服务执行董事

MONEY MATTERS

理财有方

Interest rates will go up

Three per cent is the forecast for the federal funds rate to reach this year, as rates keep heading north. And looking at the pace of US projected rate hikes, Mortgage Supermart's Mr Hui sees the one- and three-month SIBOR climbing towards 2 to 2.5 per cent by the end of this year.

利率将走高

随着美国经济增长持续向好、失业率下滑，以及通货膨胀接近2%的目标水平，美国联邦储备局预料将继续加息，让利率回稳，因此在中短期内，房贷利率料会继续上扬。

联储局利率目前预计将在今年达到3%，并在2020年达至3.5%。新元银行同业拆息率(SIBOR)往往与联储局利率挂钩，而新元银行同业拆息率又决定了银行房屋贷款利率。

独立贷款咨询公司Mortgage Supermart私人客户服务主管許光俊在谈到美国利率上调的步伐时表示，一和三个月的新元银行同业拆息率预料将在年底上升至2%-2.5%之间。



BY RACHEL TAN

Singapore has seen several successful en bloc sales over the years, which has led to an evolving residential landscape as new, swankier developments replace older properties.

These newbies cater to the needs of today's homeowner through updated offerings. For example, the new Kent Ridge Hill Residences was designed to celebrate its hillside location through features highlighting nature such as a waterfall, waterbed, a forest walk and a hill trail.

The latest smart home technologies also feature in these new developments. At the lift lobby at JadeScape, facial recognition technology is used to identify residents and guests.

And at selected units at Parc Esta, a smart two-way mirror with an electronic display behind the glass is installed in kitchens to show customised information based on residents' preferences.

What's more, many new properties boast efficient design concepts so that the residential units can offer the same standard of living within a more compact space — thanks to improvements in building technology.

Chief executive officer of PropNex Realty Ismail Gafoor says that even though these new 99-year lease replacements are priced higher than their predecessors, they remain attractive — thanks to these exciting features. The vibrancy of their neighbourhoods is boosted, and this contributes to the regeneration of the area.

We take a visual look at how things have changed — from the erection of taller buildings to the introduction of interesting amenities.

多年来，新加坡已经出现了几次成功的集体出售。随着新的、更时髦的开发项目取代旧房产，我国的住宅也随之不断浮现新面貌。

这些新发展项目推出时新的设备，满足现代房主的需求。例如，新的 Kent Ridge Hill Residences 住宅项目，在设计上利用它位于山坡的地理优势，发展出瀑布水床、森林步道和山径的设置。

这些最新的智能住宅，少不了也结合最时尚的智能家居技术。比如在 JadeScape 的电梯大厅，就采用脸部识别技术，用于识别居民和客人。

在东景苑 (Parc Esta) 的一些单位里，厨房内安装了一个带有电子显示屏的智能双向镜子，可根据居民的喜爱显示定制的信息。

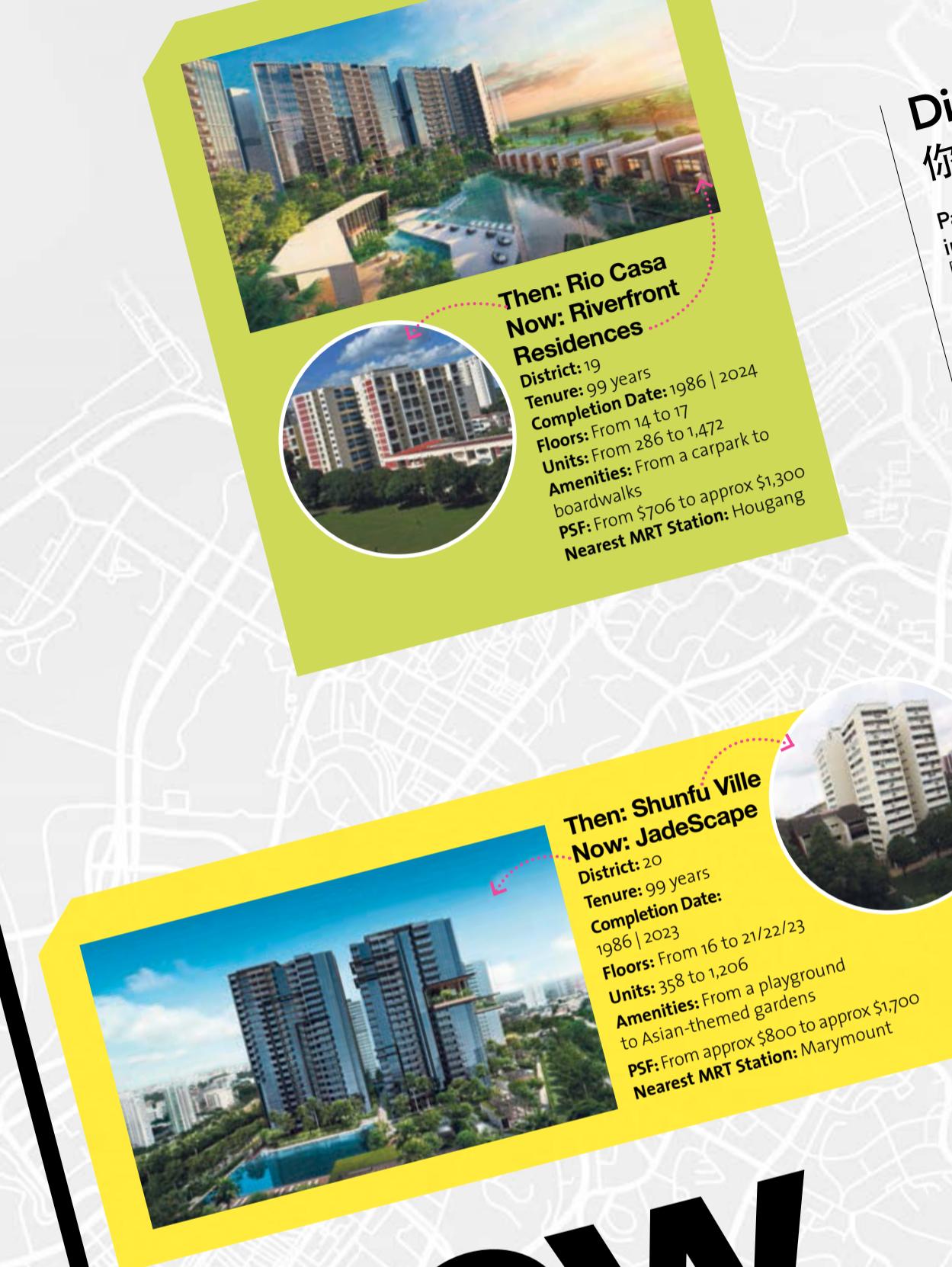
更重要的是，许多新物业拥有高效的设计理念，因此住宅单元可以在小空间内提供相同的生活标准——这要归功于建筑技术的改进。

博纳集团 (PropNex) 总裁伊斯迈 (Ismail Gafoor) 表示，尽管这些新的99年地契单位售价比原有的单位更高，但由于具备振奋人心的新功能，而深具吸引力。它们提升了社区的活力，对该地区的更新帮助不小。

我们就用图像来看看住宅里外的变化——从高楼林立到引人入胜的设施。

Then & now

How is Singapore's residential landscape changing as a result of en bloc sales?
我国住宅景观变变变



Did you know? 你可知道...

Past owners may choose to invest in the replacement development

Explains PropNex Realty's Mr Gafoor: "This is because of their attachment to the neighbourhood and the amenities available. However, new developments (with their array of unit sizes and facilities) can also attract different segments of buyers and investors such as younger couples, HDB upgraders within the vicinity and investors locally and abroad who are attracted to the unique selling points of the replacement condominiums."

一小部分旧业主可能会选择投资在旧居重建后的项目
伊斯迈解释：“这是因为他们对该社区和那里的便利设施已产生依恋感。”
“此外，新开发项目也可以吸引不同的买家和投资者，包括年轻夫妇，临近要提升住屋的组屋居民及本地和海外投资者，他们被新的替代公寓独特的卖点所吸引。”

Redevelopment potential is determined by factors such as plot ratio

Mr Gafoor says: "Developers ascertain various factors and considerations such as the land use zoning, plot ratio, land size and gross floor area to determine the type of development to undertake."

Key executive officer of ERA Singapore Eugene Lim adds that "it is also possible that the previous development had large units, and hence there is potential for building smaller (and therefore a greater number of) units despite having the same plot ratio".

重建的考量因素：地积比率、建筑面.....
伊斯迈指出：“通常，开发商会确定各种考量因素，例如土地用途分区，容积率（plot ratio），土地面积，总建筑面积以及其他组成部分，以确定开发的类型。”

ERA主要执行员林东荣补充说，“一些较旧的开发项目没有把土地充分利用，因此是有机会进行再开发，加强土地使用的。”

“此外，以前的开发项目单位面积较大，因此尽管具有相同的地积比率，但新开发商可以建造更小、更多的单位，因此也有可能进行开发。”

En bloc replacements attract a new market segment
Mr Lim explains that while previous developments were spacious and suitable for large families, new projects appeal to a younger crowd who prefer better condominium facilities and smarter homes to space.

集体出售后新发展项目吸引新的购房者类型
林东荣解释说，以前的开发项目宽敞且适合大家庭，而新项目则吸引年轻族群，他们可能不需要那么多的空间，宁愿拥有更好的公寓设施和高智能的住宅。



insight 焦点

W
S
E

JANUARY-JUNE 2019 PLANNED LAUNCHES

DISTRICT 5

■ FORMERLY NORMANTON PARK

Normanton Park | Kent Ridge MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
1,882 units | By Kingsford Development

DISTRICT 21

■ FORMERLY GOH & GOH BUILDING

Upper Bukit Timah Road | Beauty World MRT Station
Mixed-use property | Freehold
100 units | By BBR Holdings

DISTRICT 8

■ UPTOWN @ FARRER

Perumal Road | Farrer Park MRT Station
Mixed-use property | 99-year lease
356 units | By Low Keng Huat

DISTRICT 9

■ GOVERNMENT LAND SALE

Jiak Kim Street | *Great World MRT Station
Mixed-use property | 99-year lease
500 units | By Frasers Property

■ GOVERNMENT LAND SALE

Handy Road/Mount Sophia | Dhoby Ghaut MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
130 units | By City Developments Limited

DISTRICT 10

■ FOURTH AVENUE RESIDENCES

Fourth Avenue | Sixth Avenue MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
476 units | By Allgreen Properties

■ SLOANE RESIDENCES

Balmoral Road | Newton MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
52 units | By Tiong Seng Group and Ocean Sky International

■ FORMERLY ROYALVILLE

Anamalai Avenue/Bukit Timah Road/ Lily Avenue | Sixth Avenue MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
284 units | By Allgreen Properties

■ FORMERLY TOHO MANSION

Holland Road | Holland Village MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
70 units | By Koh Brothers Group

■ FORMERLY TULIP GARDEN

Farrer Road/ Holland Road/ Leedon Heights |
Farrer Road MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
672 units | By MCL Land and Yanlord Land Group

■ THE HYDE

Balmoral Road | Newton MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
NO. OF UNITS | By Woh Hup Group

DISTRICT 11

■ 35 GILSTEAD

Gilstead Road | Newton MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
70 units | By TEE Land

■ MOULMEIN 27

Moulmein Rise | Novena MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
356 units | By Roxy-Pacific Holdings

■ FORMERLY DUNEARNS GARDENS

Dunearn Road | Newton MRT station
Residential property | Freehold
348 units | By Evan Lim Group

DISTRICT 14

■ REZI 24

Lorong 24 Geylang | Aljunied MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
110 units | By KSH Holdings, Lian Beng Group and Heeton Holdings

DISTRICT 15

■ MEYERHOUSE

Meyer Road | *Tanjong Katong MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
57 units | By UOL Group

■ NYON

Amber Road | *Tanjong Katong MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
92 units | By Woh Hup Group

■ FORMERLY AMBER PARK

Amber Gardens | *Tanjong Katong MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
616 units | By City Developments Limited and Hong Leong Group

■ FORMERLY KATONG PARK TOWERS

Arthur Road | *Katong Park MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
290 units | By Bukit Sembawang Estates

■ FORMERLY THE ALBRACCA

Meyer Place | *Katong Park MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
65 units | By Sustained Land

DISTRICT 16

■ LODGE 77

Upper East Coast Road | *Siglap MRT Station
Mixed-use property | Freehold
52 units | By KTC Group

DISTRICT 17

■ CHANGI GARDEN

Jalan Mariam | Tampines East MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
320 units | By Chip Eng Seng Corporation

DISTRICT 18

■ TREASURE AT TAMPINES

Tampines Street 11 | Simei MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
2,225 units | By Sim Lian Group

DISTRICT 19

■ FORMERLY FLORENCE REGENCY

Hougang Avenue 2 | Kovan MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
1,410 units | By Logan Property Holdings

■ THE GAZANIA

How Sun Drive | Bartley MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
250 units | By SingHaiyi Group and Huajiang International

■ THE LILUM

How Sun Road | Bartley MRT Station
Residential property | Freehold
80 units | By SingHaiyi Group

DISTRICT 26

■ THE ESSENCE

Chong Kuo Road | *Springleaf MRT Station
Residential property | 99-year lease
84 units | By Lian Soon Holdings and OKP Holdings

■ TO BE ANNOUNCED *UPCOMING

■ WEST ■ CENTRAL ■ EAST ■ NORTH

COMPILED BY: HAIFIZ RASID SOURCE: URA, ORANGETEE & TIE RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY, SRX



M A R T I N

M O D E R N

玛庭豪苑



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Green oasis

TEE Land's contemporary, freehold developments Lattice One and 35 Gilstead blend nature with exclusivity

BY S LINA

Living in a country that progresses at a breakneck speed, the race to the top never ends and stress is a part of everyday life.

This is why it is crucial that your home is an oasis of calm you can retreat to at the end of a hectic day. Boutique property developer TEE Land strives to meet these needs with its premium, niche developments. Among the latest to join its stable are Lattice One and 35 Gilstead.

At just five storeys tall, these developments stand out from the multitude of high-rise options on the market. Reminiscent of low-density apartments within a landed enclave, which are such a rarity these days, they come with all the features of a modern home.

And with fewer than 100 units each, they are a boon for those who prefer living within an exclusive community.

Naturally appealing
With verdant greenery in its backyard, Lattice One puts you in a prime location that still embraces suburban living.

Comprising two blocks of two- to four-bedroom apartments, it is located just a hop and a skip away from lifestyle hotspots Junction 8, Thomson Plaza and Sembawang Hills Food Centre, as well as hip cafés in the Upper Thomson Road area.

On cool evenings, take a scenic stroll along a 900m boardwalk trail, bordered by lush forest foliage that leads to MacRitchie Reservoir or Lower Peirce Reservoir Park. Fancy more of a workout? Head for the 25m pool, complete with a garden roof terrace, the gym and other communal facilities.

Parents will appreciate the proximity of popular schools such as CHIJ St Nicholas Girls' School, Anderson Junior College and Raffles Institution. These are accessible as they are well served by Upper Thomson Road, Mayflower MRT Station will also be ready come 2020.

Modern chic

Situated in a coveted neighbourhood, 35 Gilstead puts offices, schools and lifestyle hotspots within easy reach.

Just minutes' walk from Newton MRT Station, it is close to malls Novena Square and United Square where you can get all your errands done, from banking to drycleaning to shopping for groceries. Beyond that, the Orchard Road shopping belt is just one MRT station or a 10-minute stroll away.

Meal options from family-friendly restaurants to hip watering holes are available at the malls and Newton Food Centre. Proximity to medical facilities such as Mount Elizabeth Novena and Novena Medical Centre, which are located in Singapore's premier Novena medical hub, also mean timely medical treatment for your family.

Reputable schools Anglo-Chinese School Junior as well as Barker campuses, Singapore Chinese Girls' School, St Margaret's Primary School, St Joseph's Institution Junior, and Catholic Junior College are also located close by.

Seamless convenience

With both developments, TEE Land has improved physical sign-in processes for visiting guests. They simply have to scan a QR code for registration, to arrive at your home in no time.

There, they will admire the top-quality finishings and top-of-the-line appliances that kit out your home. Give them a tour of the spacious interiors (the master bedroom can fit a king-size bed and other bedrooms, a queen-size bed) before leading your guests to the balcony where they can take in unobstructed views of the neighbourhood, and beyond.

TEE Land CEO Jonathan Phua says: "With good freehold locality and a passion for building quality homes, our forte lies in creating unique living experiences. At TEE Land, we firmly believe in creating value and an exclusive living experience our buyers aspire to – 'Beyond Good Living'."



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



"With good freehold locality and a passion for building quality homes, our forte lies in creating unique living experiences."

Jonathan Phua,
TEE Land CEO

PHOTOS: TEE LAND



LATTICE ONE (TOP: Dec 2022)

1 Seraya Crescent, Upper Thomson Road.
Units available: 48
Nearest MRT Stations: Mayflower and Bright Hill (both slated to open in 2020)
Average PSF: \$1,850



35 GILSTEAD ROAD (TOP: Dec 2022)

35 Gilstead Road.
Units available: 70
Nearest MRT Stations: Novena and Newton
Average PSF: \$2,500

绿洲居家

精品房地产业发展商腾地(TEE Land)旗下的私人永久地契“Lattice One”和“35 Gilstead”与大自然融为一体，凸显独树一格的现代化风格。

在一个发展神速的国家生活，力争上游的竞争永无止境。因此压力也成为日常生活的一部分。正因为这样，在忙碌了一天后，你的家应成为一个放松身心的安乐窝。

腾地致力于发展精致、精品房地产项目来迎合需求，而最新的项目有“Lattice One”和“35 Gilstead”。虽然只有五层楼高，但“Lattice One”和“35 Gilstead”这两个私宅项目却在众多高楼迭现中引人注目。令时今日，在私人住宅区出现低楼层的住宅已经少见了，何况还装设了现代家庭设备。

“Lattice One”和“35 Gilstead”各拥有少过100个单位，对于想居住在这专属社区的买家来说，是极具吸引力的。

来自大自然的魅力

“Lattice One”的后院草木苍翠，让你在黄金地段享受郊区生活。结合了西两房至四房卧房的大楼，公寓距离碧山第八坊购物中心、汤申大厦和三巴旺山熟食中心只有一箭之遥，而汤申路上段路旁也有不少新铺餐厅。

在凉风习习的傍晚，沿着900米长的木栈道漫步，沉浸在绿意盎然的环境，一路走到麦芝芝蓄水池或贝雅士下段蓄水池，想更进行更多的运动。公寓内的设备还包括25米长的泳池、健身房或屋顶平台花园及其他公共设施。

对家长来说，受欢迎的圣尼各拉女校、安德逊实龙岗初阶学院和莱佛士书院近在咫尺；除了取道汤申路上段路前往这些学校，丽华地铁站也将于2020年开通。

现代时尚风

“35 Gilstead”位于住宅单位抢手的社区内，无论办公楼、学校或购物消遣点都能短距离内。

例如：只需步行几分钟就能到达纽顿地铁站，无论需要买食材、干洗衣物或到银行办理交易手续，都能到附近的诺维娜广场和大华广场（United Square）。35 Gilstead离乌节路也只有一个地铁站的距离或步行10分钟就到了。

用餐选择更是多样化，包括亲家庭的餐馆，在购物中心内相隔咫尺的心心是便捷的轻食处。维娜地铁站周围地段也发展为医疗枢纽，医疗设施包括伊丽莎白诺维娜医院和诺维娜医疗中心，能提供及时的医疗服务。

知名学校如英华学校（巴克路）、新加坡女子学校、圣玛格烈小学、圣若瑟书院附小和公教初级学院也在公寓的附近。

无缝衔接的便利

腾地也为两个公寓简化探房程序，访客只要扫描二维码就能办理登记手续，迅速到达您的家。到时，访客就能欣赏到您家中最顶尖的装潢和家电。带领访客参观您宽敞的公寓（主卧室可容纳king-size床两张，其他房间也能容纳queen-size床）。再到阳台瞭望不受阻挡的邻里景色。

腾地总裁白秋说：“拥有位置优越的永久地契地段和打造优质房子的热忱，我们的优势在于创造一个独特的居家体验。腾地致力为买家创造价值和打造独一无二的居家体验，满足他们‘超越好生活’的渴望。”



MYTH:

The landlord hat looks good on anyone. No stress, no hassle

FACT: “Not quite. You hear of people with multiple properties who seem to collect rent without any hassle. But being a landlord comes with many responsibilities, such as ensuring your tenant pays rent on time, especially if your rental income pays the monthly mortgage.

Property damage or loss is also a big concern. Should your tenant be careless and lose the access passes or mailbox key, or damage the furniture and white goods on your property, you will have to replace or repair them. Such events are unpredictable, so you need to be financially ready to deal with them.

Engaging a responsible — and responsive — agent matters, especially if you only have the bandwidth to monitor rent. Since you have to pay a commission anyway, let your agent handle multiple issues.”

迷思

过程轻松简单

事实：“不一定。我们常听到拥有多个房地产的屋主轻而易举地租出房子，收取租金。其实，身为房东还有许多责任，包括确保租户准时缴租，尤其是当你每个月需用租金偿还贷款时。

房子遭到破坏也是一大问题。若租户粗心大意，遗失了居民通行证或信箱钥匙，又或破坏家具或家器，你就必须负责更换或修理。这类情况难以预料，因此你必须具有一定的经济能力。

若你没有时间处理各项琐事，不妨支付佣金，找个尽责、态度积极的房地产经纪为你代劳。”



PHOTO: ISTOCK



MYTH:

All you need is capital for the down payment

FACT: “Aside from the down payment applicable to the purchase, you will need to pay legal conveyancing costs and maintenance fees.

Prepare by channelling monthly savings and bonuses into your down payment fund. I also used some of my CPF monies to buy blue chip stocks in the years leading up to my purchase, which appreciated and paid for 15 per cent of the purchase price. Make sure you can support the monthly mortgage payments without relying entirely on rental income, which may come in late.”

迷思:

你只需足够的资金支付首期即可

事实：“除了首期付款，你还需支付律师费和维修费。

把每月的储蓄和花红积存起来，作为首期付款。几年前，我也利用公积金购买蓝筹股，增值后卖掉足以支付百分之十五的房价。记得，你应该确保自己每月的分期付款无需全数依赖租金来偿还，因为你每月不一定会准时收到租金。”



出租房子的3大迷思

misconceptions about owning rental property

Landlord Suzanne Lim shares the valuable financial lessons she has learnt from earning passive income by renting out property, reports **Rachel Tan**

林秦萍分享她出租房子，成为房东以赚取固定被动收入的宝贵经验

Daintree RESIDENCE

Exquisite and elegant, Daintree Residence is a naturally sophisticated architectural masterpiece, with a scenic Valley, enchanting Rainforest, and 35,000 sqft TreeTop Walk offering an uninterrupted nature getaway, just a few steps from Beauty World MRT Station.

精工细筑，俊雅超俗，Daintree Residence 宛如浑然天成，堪称为怡人又雅致的建筑艺术杰作。
公寓建有风景绚丽的沟谷，迷人的热带雨林，以及面积为35,000平方英尺的空中花园，
为居者敞开宏阔的大自然之门。且仅距离美世界地铁站数步之遥。



Lush side of life

For illustration purpose only

SALES GALLERY ALONG TOH TUCK ROAD, NEAR BEAUTY WORLD MRT STATION

SEEK OUT FORTUNE & PROSPERITY THIS NEW YEAR
迎猪接福，吉祥旺兴，合家平安！

What does 2019 have in store for you? Learn the prospects for Daintree Residence and yourself from Fengshui Master Hui.
想了解金猪年的运势及 Daintree Residence 的风水格局？我们特邀来晋戒风水大师为您指点迷津。

12 JAN 2019 (SAT) • TIME: 2 - 4 PM | 2019年1月12日 (星期六) • 时间：下午2 - 4时

*Seminar will be held in Mandarin. *讲座将以中文进行



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Setia

Developer: Setia (Bukit Timah) Pte Ltd (UEN: 201711451R). Developer's License No.: C1263. Lot 091497 MK 05 at Toh Tuck Road. Land Tenure: Leasehold Estate of 99 years commencing from 17 July 2017. Encumbrances: Caveat IE/893104R in favour of Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation Limited. Expected Date of Vacant Possession: 16 July 2022. Expected Date of Legal Completion: 16 July 2025. Building Plan Approval No. A1839-0012-2017-BP01 dated 14 June 2018.

Dream home come true

With new rules in place, first-time buyers can still land good buys if they have the right mindset and long-term goals. **R Sivanithy** offers advice on how to approach the search

市场出现新条例，但首次买家只要保有正确的
心态，定下长期目标，还是能够买到理想的
家园。西瓦尼迪(R Sivanithy)就为你提供各种
建议，让找房子的过程更加顺利

As a trainer with the Institute for Financial Literacy (IFL) which is part of the government's MoneySENSE national financial education programme, I teach Singaporeans the basics of financial planning and investing. Among the tips are these: higher returns come hand-in-hand with higher risk, and that weighing up risk tolerances, investment objectives and budgetary constraints is key to investing wisely.

We emphasise the importance of an individual's investment horizon — the younger you are, the more you are able to invest in riskier assets. This is because you have more time to recover from losses provided, of course, you remain employed for many years and have the appropriate risk appetite. Folks with a few years to retirement are usually advised to avoid too much risk, because they have a shorter recovery horizon.

The IFL depicts the risk-return relationship with a graph. Risk on one axis, returns on another, with a line rising from bottom left to top right. Along this line, various investments, starting from lowest risk/lowest return investments (cash and fixed deposits) are parked at bottom left. At the top right are those with highest risk/highest return, namely equities and derivatives.

A common question I am asked is why property investment sits somewhere in the middle, because surely, in land-strapped Singapore, buying property is quite risk-free, and many Singaporeans believe it is a "sure-win".



PHOTOS: ISTOCK

The reason is simple. Although property generally does make a good investment in the long term, there are many factors that affect it:

- **Initial outlay:** It involves a large sum of money. The down payment alone is 25 per cent of the price, plus the stamp duties, legal fees etc;
- **Maintenance:** As a landlord, you have to maintain your property, for instance, performing regular repairs (if the property is bought for rental income);
- **Liquidity:** Compared to stocks, it may take longer to sell your property and see returns;
- **Risk:** A change in sentiment or demand or supply could affect rental income, which in turn impacts loan repayments;
- **Unforeseen changes:** New rules can adversely affect prices, like July 2018's cooling measures — the fourth round since 2011.

Bear in mind that cooling measures are intended to curb speculative fever and stabilise prices. It targets those who are looking to take loans for second, third or even fourth properties, since the Additional Buyers' Stamp Duty (ABSD) for such purchases has been raised sharply while the loan-to-value (LTV) limits have been also drastically lowered.

Even so, for many of us, a piece of property is regarded as a home, a roof over our heads and a valuable — often sentimental — asset that can be passed on to our children. Despite occasional

short-term shocks to the market, property can still be a rewarding long-term investment.

HOW TO MANAGE COOLING MEASURES

On July 6, 2018, the Government announced measures to rein in rising property prices. The move doubled the ABSD for developers from 15 to 30 per cent, slowing down en bloc deals. It also curbed liquidity.

The Sunday Times on Sept 30 cited an Orange Tee & Tie Research study, which found that sales of non-landed homes plunged 49 per cent in the 62 days after the measures were announced, compared to the 62 days before the announcement ("Private Home Sales Hit By July 6 Measures").

Prices during this period fell by 0.1 per cent, from around \$1,513 to \$1,511 per square foot. "That suggests the compounded effect of previous measures, coupled with the latest round, did finally slow price growth," says Ms Christine Sun, Orange Tee's head of research and consultancy.

For investors who had bought before July 6 hoping to turn a quick profit, this might not be welcome news. But for others contemplating a purchase, all is not lost because:

- There is no additional or increase in stamp duty payable by Singapore citizens looking to buy their first home;
- Although the LTV ratio has been lowered from 80 to 75 per cent, for up to 20 per cent of the 25

per cent deposit, you can use your CPF (that is, you only need to fork out 5 per cent in cash if you have enough CPF);

- The lowered LTV ratio means borrowing a smaller amount, and therefore paying less interest over the loan tenure;
- You won't be affected if you're thinking of upgrading your home, and have only one mortgage;
- According to the Real Estate Developers Association of Singapore or Redas, about 36,000 private residential units will be up for sale in 2018 and 2019. This is in addition to the estimated 28,000 unsold private residences and 3,080 executive condominiums available as of Q4 2017. For this supply to be absorbed, developers are likely to offer attractive discounts, so there will be bargains to be had;

● Prices have fallen by an average of only \$2 per square foot in the two months after the latest cooling measures, which suggests an underlying resilience to buying property in Singapore. This should be heartening for the long-term investor.

The writer was a former Business Times journalist and is currently with MoneySENSE, Singapore's financial education programme with the Singapore Polytechnic Institute for Financial Literacy.



理财通识学院 (Institute of Financial Literacy, 简称IFL) 是“存钱有方，理财有道”(MoneySENSE)全国财务教育计划的一部分，身为这里的导师，我向国人传授有关财务规划和投资的基本知识。我常分享的贴士包括：更高的回报率代表更高的投资风险，要进行明智的投资，就必须考虑自己可承担的风险、投资目标与预算。

我们常强调，个人的投资时限——年纪越轻，可承担的风险越高，因为你有更多的时间弥补亏损。仅剩几年就要退休的人士一般都会避免进行高风险投资，因为他们的时限较短。

买家经常会问，房地产为什么处于中间位置，他们认为新加坡土地有限，购买房地产应该是风险相当低的，甚至是“必赢”的。

其实，原因很简单。尽管房地产在长期而言是相当不错的投资，但它也受到很多因素的影响，包括：

- **初始投资：**买房子需要大笔钱。单单首期付款就是25%，另外还必须加上印花税和法律费用等。
- **维护费用：**身为房东，你必须定期维修自己的房子，尤其是当房子是买来出租的，更必须确保家居状况良好。
- **流动性：**与股票和定期存款相比，卖房子需要时间，因此回报期也较长。
- **风险：**市场情绪、供求的改变都会影响租金收入，进而影响每月的分期贷款。
- **无法预知的变化：**新条例可能会严重影响房地产价格，例如2018年7月的降温措施。这是自2011年来的第4轮房地产降温措施。

降温措施的主要目的是抵制投机行为，稳定价格。其对象是在为第二、第三和第四个产业寻找贷款的买家，因为这些产业的额外买方印花税大幅度增加，而贷款与估值比率顶限则收紧。

尽管如此，对许多人而言，房子是我们的家，它往往带有感情色彩，我们希望把它传给下一代。因此，尽管市场偶尔会有波动，房地产还是值得长期投资的。

如何应付降温措施

2018年7月6日，政府宣布一系列措施，以维持稳定的房地产市场。发展商的额外买方印花税从15%增至30%，导致集体出售交易缓慢下来。这也影响了流动性。

《海峡时报》在9月30日引用了一项Orange Tee & Tie的研究报告，报告指出，非有地住宅销售量在降温措施宣布的62天前与62天后，下滑了49% (“Private Home Sales Hit By July 6 Measures”).

价格在这段期间下滑了0.1%，从每平方英尺\$1,513跌至\$1,511。橙易产业(Orange Tee)研究与咨询部主管孙燕清说：“这表示过去几次降温措施的复合效应，加上最新一轮的，的确让价格增长放缓了。”

这对那些在7月6日之前购买房子，希望快速赚取利润的投资者可能是坏消息。但对那些正打算进场的买家来说，情况其实并没有那么糟。

原因如下：

- 购买第一个房子的新加坡公民并不需要支付额外印花税。
- 尽管贷款与估值比率的顶限从80%降低至75%，买家还是可以利用公积金支付高达20%的定金(定金总额为25%)
- 贷款与估值比率调低表示买家可借的贷款数额少了，因此所需支付的利息也相对减少
- 若你打算提升房子，仅在供一个房屋贷款，这些措施并不会影响你。
- 根据新加坡产业发展商公会的数据，2018至2019年，有大约36,000间私人住宅供出售。这还不包括2017年第4季未售出的大约28,000间私人住宅和3,080间执行公寓。因此发展商必会推出各种优惠促销吸引买家。
- 在最新降温措施推出后的首两个月，每平方英尺价格平均跌了\$2，这表示本地房地产具备潜在韧性，这对长期投资者来说是好消息。

作者是《商业时报》前记者，目前是新加坡理工学院理财通识学院(简称IFL)的导师。IFL是“存钱有方，理财有道”(MoneySENSE)全国财务教育计划的一部分。

3 tips for first time buyers 首次买家小贴士



Always bear in mind the location

It's a bit of a cliché to emphasise “location, location, location” when it comes to buying property, but there's no denying that a home that is centrally located and/or within a few minutes' walk from public transport and amenities is likely to be more highly valued than one in the suburbs that is, say, 20 to 30 minutes away from an MRT station and shopping centres.

地点是关键

一个地点适中，只需几分钟就可乘搭交通工具或使用各种设施的房子肯定比一个距离地铁站和购物中心20至30分钟的房子来得值钱。



Shop around for the best loans

Buying property involves a large capital outlay which can run into seven figures. For most of us, this involves taking a large loan for a lengthy period, possibly, 25 to 30 years. For an apartment costing \$1.5 million, you have to make a 25 per cent down payment now, up from 20 per cent previously. This works out to \$375,000 (excluding stamp duty and other fees), which means you will have to finance the balance of \$1.125 million with a mortgage.

At an interest rate of 1.5 per cent, and assuming a loan period of 30 years, this works out to a monthly instalment of \$3,883.

If the rate rises to 2 per cent, the monthly amount needed rises to \$4,158. In total, the interest component for the 30-year loan at 1.5 per cent is \$272,737 versus \$371,959 at a rate of 2 per cent. If your loan rate rises to 2 per cent, you will pay \$99,222 more in interest (\$371,959 to \$272,737). So even a small difference in interest rates can make a big difference over time.

货比三家选贷款

购买房子需要大笔资金，有时甚至高达七位数。对大部分买家来说，这表示必须贷款25至30年。在这段时间，你必须承受利息波动，确保自己有能力偿还贷款。

一个150万元的公寓，你必须先还25%的首期，即37万5000元(不包括印花税和其他费用)，其余的112万5000元则贷款。若利息是1.5%，贷款期为30年，你每个月就必须偿还3883元。



Consider buying mortgage insurance

What if you lose your job, or suffer an accident that renders you unable to service your loans? For peace of mind, you should consider buying mortgage insurance, as this ensures that you are able to service your mortgage repayments for the entirety of your home loan tenure, no matter what happens to you or your income. Come what may, your home loan will get paid off and your family will have a home.

考虑购买抵押贷款保险

若你丢失了工作，或发生不幸意外，那该如何偿还贷款？你可考虑购买抵押贷款保险，它确保你一旦发生什么事，就无须支付剩余的房贷，让家人可高枕无忧。

Premium residences on both sides of the island.

Coming soon to the west coast of Singapore is Whistler Grand. And in the east, The Tapestry. But while their locations place them apart, quality brings them together. Both Whistler Grand and The Tapestry are developed by CDL - Singapore's trusted property developer with a track record of over 50 years.

LOCATION
Located near future Pandan Reservoir MRT station and Singapore's second CBD

FACILITIES
Over 60 facilities including cantilevered gym, lap pool, glamping garden

INTERIORS
Luxurious interiors with premium Bosch appliances and Grohe bathroom fittings

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES*
Parcel and laundry collection, housekeeping, transport services and more

SMART HOME*
Smart voice assistance, digital lock, door sensor, air conditioner and lighting controls

Artist's impression

Whistler Grand

If you were visiting a friend in the West Coast area, you'll sense the relatively peaceful atmosphere, especially on the relaxing walks around the Pandan Reservoir and in West Coast Park. With good schools like Nan Hua Primary School within 1km, plus Singapore's second CBD and malls like JEM and Westgate, life just feels a little more relaxed around here. The development boasts over 60 facilities including an awesome cantilevered gym, a lap pool and a glamping garden. Residential services include holding your laundry and deliveries till you come home.

In our 1- to 5-bedroom units, dual key units and penthouses, you'll be struck by the luxurious spatial layout and fine craftsmanship. Quality surrounds you, including the kitchen, with its compressed quartz kitchen countertop and the Bosch cooker hood, hob, oven and refrigerator. Oh, and let's not forget the brains in this beauty - intelligent voice assistance, smart digital lock, door sensor, air conditioner and lighting controls. Now, that's West Coast living at its finest!

THE TAPESTRY

Conveniently located along Tampines Street 86 and a stone's throw from the Tampines MRT station, The Tapestry is really not difficult to fall in love with.

Just a glimpse of the 100m infinity pool, hydrotherapy pool, tennis court and over 50 facilities including a childcare centre*, and you'll understand why The Tapestry is called the pride of Tampines. Enjoy exclusive residential services* that include a host to arrange for a private chef, housekeeping, transport services and more.

The 1- to 5-bedroom dual key + study units are efficiently laid out and fitted with smart home features* and designer appliances like the Haiku ceiling fan and the Teka cooker hood, hob, oven, refrigerator and washer-cum-dryer. You'll also find an accessories cabinet fitted with a mirror in the master bedroom, and a pelmet to conceal blinds or curtain fixtures.

Whistler Grand Sales Gallery at West Coast Vale | The Tapestry Sales Gallery at Tampines Grande

Open 10am to 7pm daily | Call/WhatsApp **8783 1818** | www.cdlhomes.com.sg

卓越奢华雅居 岛国两端大放异彩

屹立于岛国两侧的御峰与荟锦嘉园，东西相望，品质相称，卓越奢华。这两项优质住宅项目是由新加坡备受信赖的发展商，且拥有50多年辉煌业绩的城市发展荣誉出品。

御峰 (Whistler Grand)

被大自然环抱的御峰，让奢华精致的家居生活更为赏心悦目，轻松愉悦！

- 吃喝玩乐，无尽选择 — 邻近新加坡第二商业中心及JEM、西城等商场
- 贴近大自然 — 邻近班丹蓄水池及西海岸公园
- 交通便利 — 未来的班丹蓄水池地铁站在咫尺
- 择校优势 — 毗邻名校南华小学(一公里内)
- 超过60多项休闲设施 — 亮点为悬臂式健身房、泳池及露营场地
- 住户礼宾服务* — 包括家政及代收干洗衣物与包裹
- 宽敞房型 — 1至5卧室、双钥匙、顶层豪华单位
- 厨房设备完善 — 配备Bosch抽油烟机、炉灶、烤箱及冰箱
- 智能家居* — 语音助手、数码锁、智能门感应器、空调及照明遥控

荟锦嘉园 (The Tapestry)

现代感十足的荟锦嘉园，营造极致的家居生活享受，绝对是别“居”一格！

- 地点便利 — 位于淡滨尼86街，邻近淡滨尼区域中心与淡滨尼地铁站
- 超过50项完善设施 — 百米无边际泳池、水疗池、网球场及托儿中心^等
- 住户礼宾服务* — 包括私人厨师、家政、交通等安排
- 宽敞房型 — 1至5卧室双钥匙+书房单位
- 名牌电器 — Haiku吊扇、Teka厨房设施等
- 智能家居* — 语音助手、数码锁、智能门感应器、空调及照明遥控
- 精心设计 — 主卧室设有配饰橱柜，以及可遮盖百叶窗和窗帘装置的窗帘盒

御峰示范公寓位于 West Coast Vale

荟锦嘉园示范公寓位于
Tampines Grande

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The first-time home buyer's finances worksheet

Option

A

Option

B

Option

C

Condominium

Property valuation

Monthly mortgage

Deposit

Loan types

Loan interest rates

Loan period

Closing costs

Legal fees

Down payments

Insurance

Buyer's stamp duty

Additional buyers' stamp duty

Property tax

Rental yield



Sky-high living

V On Shenton: The new icon at the heart of Singapore's financial district

BY LUKE TAN

What is it like to live in the heart of Singapore's financial district? Residents at 54-storey residential tower V On Shenton enjoy metropolitan living at a prestigious address that promises all the lifestyle conveniences they need.

A home here places you in one of Singapore's tallest residential buildings, and gives you the privilege of waking up to stunning views of the sea and city skyline.

Built for city living

The towering V On Shenton, designed by world-renowned architect Ben Van Berkel, is an impressive 54-storey residential tower that offers well thought-out and spacious interior layouts — a luxury in modern cities. These are complemented by plush finishes, creating a modern sanctuary that promotes a sense of well-being.

The design of the development is dominated by organic shapes and structures inspired by nature, and engages the senses in a clever play of light, space and greenery. Geometric panels lend aesthetic appeal and give the entire development a cohesive shell, while shading devices cleverly keep things cool in our tropical climate.

Holistic living is yours to enjoy through a range of amenities designed to soothe and relax. Three lush Sky Gardens serve as lovely venue options for getting away from it all. Laze on cosy lounge chairs, or host casual barbecues with calming views of the sea as a stunning backdrop.

Those who enjoy exercise can visit a sky gym on Level 35 or the fitness area on Level 34 or one of the many open spaces to do a spot of yoga. And at Level 8, you can do laps and enjoy the swimming pool and aqua gym.



PHOTOS:
UIC LIMITED

In the mood to eat out? Head to Level 24 where you will find a spread of outdoor dining options, kitchen choices and seating combinations available. A collaboration with culinary consultant and celebrity chef Ryan Hong, it offers gourmet dining with captivating views in cosy outdoor settings.

Great potential for upward elasticity
No destination is too far from V On Shenton, which is served by seamless transport networks including Tanjong Pagar MRT Station and the Marina Coastal Expressway. V On Shenton is just next to the upcoming Shenton Way MRT Station.

With Marina Bay Link Mall, Gardens by the Bay, the National Gallery and the Esplanade at your doorstep, you can enjoy retail therapy, outdoor fun for the family, notable exhibitions or world-class shows and concerts, depending on what

captures your fancy.
As per the Urban Renewal Authority's master plan, blueprints are being drawn up to integrate Sentosa with the Greater Southern Waterfront precinct, a new waterfront city on a 1,000ha land parcel [about the size of 30 Singapore Sports Hubs]. The adjacent island of Pulau Brani will also be developed.

Urban planners have revealed many ideas for the Greater Southern Waterfront City, and the Government hopes to brand it as the Southern Gateway of Asia.

Thanks to V On Shenton's proximity to this area and the ongoing transformation of the Central Business District, savvy homeowners can be assured of a smart investment that will retain or appreciate in value in the years to come.

For a viewing, call 8811-7690 to make an appointment or visit www.v-on-shenton.com.sg



高雅生活

珊瑚 云尚: 新加坡金融区核

心地带的新标志

寓居在新加坡金融区核心地带是什么感觉? 54层摩天豪宅珊瑚。云尚的居民在一个负盛名的地点过着都会生活, 尽享各种生活便利。

家在新加坡最高住宅楼宇之一, 每天醒来, 映入眼帘的是无敌海量和美丽的城市风景线。

为城市生活而建

由世界知名建筑师Ben Van Berkel设计的珊瑚, 云尚是一栋令人惊艳的54层高住宅大楼, 精心设计的宽敞室内布局, 堪称现代城市的一件精品。加上富丽的装潢, 缔造一片让身心感受升华的现代净土。

楼宇设计从自然中汲取灵感, 完美地把光线、空间和绿意融入其间。有机排列的几何图形环环相扣, 层层推进, 使建筑更具美感, 遮阳装置巧妙地使地处热带的大楼保持清凉。

完善的设施、舒适的环境让身心得到释放与慰藉。三个翠绿的空中花园是松懈身心的好地点, 在绝美宁静海景烘托下, 躺在舒适的休闲椅上, 或开个随兴的烤肉会。

喜爱运动的住客可以到35楼的高空健身房, 或34楼的锻炼区, 或任何一个户外空间做瑜伽, 也可以到8楼的泳池和健身水池畅泳锻炼。

想出外用餐? 24楼有各类户外用餐选择, 各式厨房和不同的座位组合。珊瑚、云尚和美食顾问明星厨师Ryan Hong合作, 让住客在舒适的户外用餐空间边观赏美景边享用精致餐饮。

巨大升值潜力

珊瑚。云尚的位置四通八达, 交通设施齐全; 包括丹戎巴葛地铁站和滨海高速公路, 兴建中的珊瑚道地铁站就在旁边。

滨海湾联通广场、滨海湾花园、国家美术馆和滨海艺术中心近在咫尺, 你可以尽情购物, 和家人外出玩乐, 参观著名展览或观赏世界级表演和音乐会。

根据市IC重建局的总体规划, 当局正规划把圣淘沙和南部淡水区结合成一个占地1000公顷(约30个新加坡体育城大小)的发展蓝图, 邻近的布拉尼岛也将发展。

城市规划官员已透露许多打造南部淡水区城市的构想, 政府希望把它发展为通往亚洲的南大门。

珊瑚。云尚离这一区不远, 加上中央商业区正逐步转型, 购入珊瑚。云尚肯定是一项精明投资, 业主未来将乐享产业升值的成果。

预约参观可拨打8811 7690 或浏览 www.v-on-shenton.com.sg

V
ON SHENTON

5A Shenton Way
Units available: 2, 2+study,
3BR and penthouses

Nearest MRT station:
Tanjong Pagar

PSF: From \$2,087

The luxe life in the heart of Singapore

The most prestigious address in the garden city—
Marina One Residences



MARINA ONE RESIDENCES
滨海盛景豪苑

23 Marina Way, Level 2
Marina Bay

BY BRYANT CHAN

Imagine waking up to gentle sunlight filtering through your blinds and the smell of fresh morning air. Standing on your balcony, you take in the glorious sight of panoramic sea views, and birds gliding over Gardens By The Bay.

You make your way to the 200 sq m fully-equipped gym for a light workout, then a dip in the 50m lap pool which overlooks the magnificent 65,000 sq ft Green Heart — your own tropical rainforest.

Ready to take on the day, you stroll through the Green Heart and straight into the Central Business District. There are four MRT lines to take you anywhere in the city, while Marina Bay Sands, Marina Bay Financial Centre and Raffles Place are minutes away on foot.

For your business lunch or a late coffee with friends, you head home to one of two signature restaurants located on the fourth storey sky terrace or The Heart, a 140,000 sq ft retail podium. The supermarket in the basement is your one-stop venue to pick up groceries and daily essentials before meeting your friends at the Green Heart for yoga classes.

After a cocktail at one of the stellar bars surrounding the Green Heart, you hoof it towards Marina Bay Sands for a world-class production or an unforgettable meal.

This is a day in the life of a resident of Marina One Residences, the only truly integrated development in one of the most exclusive areas in Singapore.

Premium integrated living in Marina Bay. Marina One Residences aims to redefine city living by offering a full range of unit types (one-, two-, three-, and four-bedroom apartments) to suit anyone — from single expatriates or couples, to families. Each of the 1,042 units is spaciously designed and luxuriously furnished with premium fixtures and fittings such as Villéroy & Boch ware in the bathrooms, and Miele

appliances and Poggenpohl kitchen cabinets.

Units feature a glorious sea view or a tranquil view of the Green Heart within Marina One. Premium facilities and amenities include private dining rooms, teppanyaki terraces and private lounges.

Everything you could want or need is at your doorstep, including a plethora of retail and dining options, from acclaimed restaurants, bars and cafés, to services ranging from drycleaning to medical.

Marina One is designed by Ingenhoven Architects from Germany, who are renowned for their "super-green" architecture. Through the use of highly innovative architectural elements and sustainability features, the comfort and efficiency of the development are maximised.

To date, it has picked up architecture accolades such as the Top Development Excellence Award (Central Completed) at the EdgeProp Singapore Excellence Awards, and was the Sustainable Development Category winner at the FIAA Singapore Property Awards 2018.

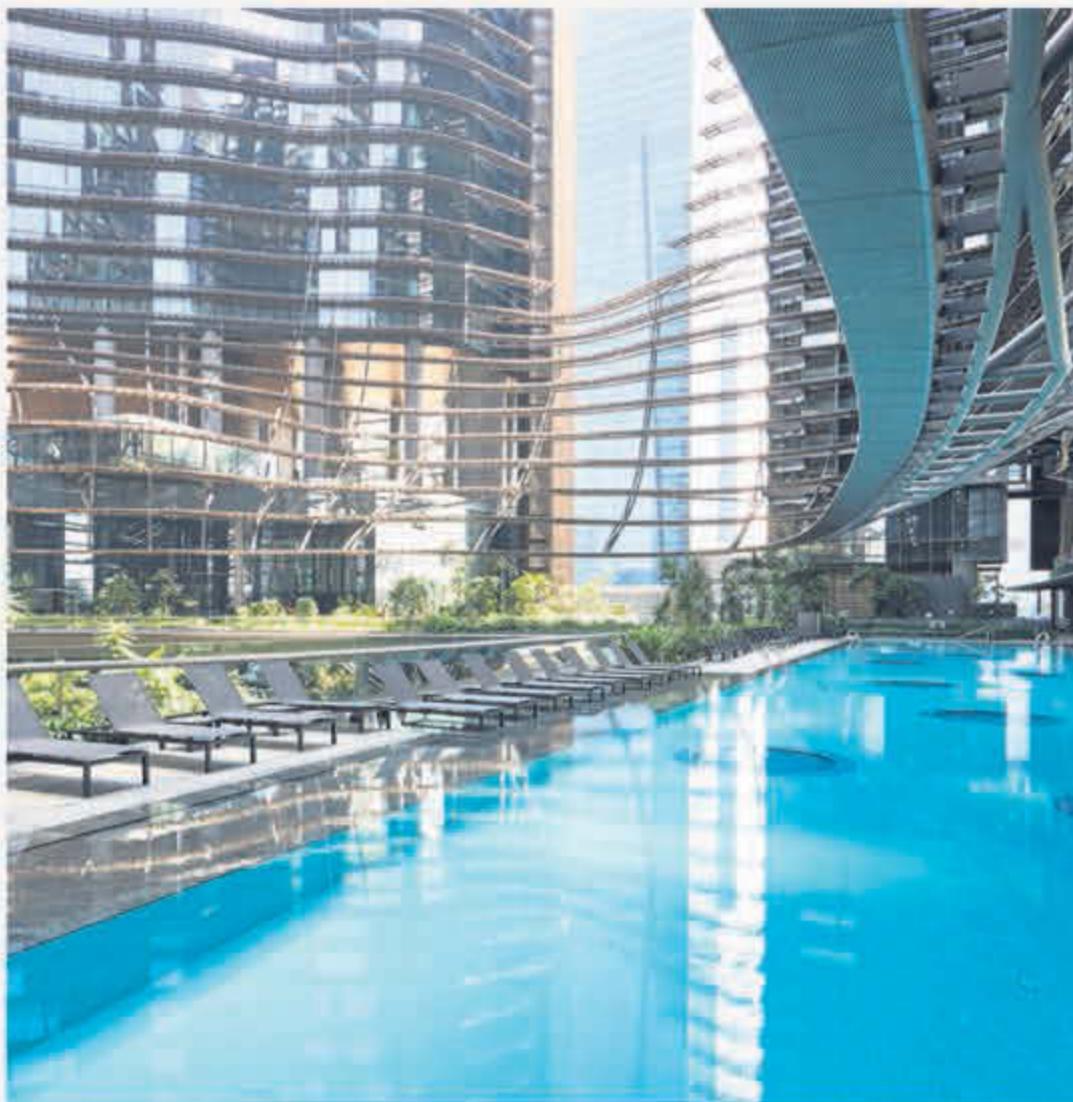
Unbeatable location

Located in the heart of the new Marina Bay financial district, Marina One Residences is at the doorstep of Downtown and Marina Bay MRT Stations, offering seamless connection to the Downtown, North-South, Circle, and upcoming Thomson-East Coast lines. A future underground pedestrian network will also connect Marina One Residences to Raffles Place and the East-West Line.

Major transport arteries such as the Marina Coastal Expressway and the East Coast Parkway are a stone's throw away for easy accessibility to Changi Airport and Sentosa. It is the only development in Marina Bay to be flanked by two gardens — Central Linear Park and Marina Station Square. Together with its signature Green Heart and the 13m-high waterfall within, residents remain close to nature despite living in the city.



PHOTOS: M+S PTE LTD



Renowned attractions such as the Esplanade and the ArtScience Museum are also within walking distance.

Great potential for further growth

Marina One also provides 1.88 million sq ft of premium Grade A office space, which houses the likes of global companies including Facebook, PricewaterhouseCoopers and British Petroleum.

Their long-term commitment

buoys rental demand for Marina One Residences, as the area attracts both locals and expats who work in Marina Bay, Raffles Place and Shenton Way.

With Marina Bay pegged by the Urban Redevelopment Authority as the new dynamic city centre with vibrant and sustainable urban living, Marina One Residences is as much a dream home as it is an excellent investment.

Visit marinaone.com.sg/register.html to find out more.



在新加坡核心地带享受奢华生活

滨海盛景豪苑—花园城市中最高尚的住处

你张开惺忪的眼睛，一道温柔的阳光从百叶窗探进来。你走到阳台伸伸腰，深深地吸口新鲜空气。远处，早晨鸟群正飞过滨海湾公园，南亮海景呈入眼帘。

你决定先到设备完善的200平方米健身房做运动，再到50米泳池游泳。这里可俯瞰郁郁葱葱的“绿色之心”，这个6万5000平方英尺的绿色园林(Green Heart)是城市中的热带雨林。

该上街了！你穿过“绿色园林”，直接步行到中央商业区。这里共有四条地铁线，交通便利。滨海湾金沙、滨海湾金融中心和莱佛士坊也近在咫尺。

想要安排商务午餐或朋友喝咖啡？你喜欢到四楼空中花园的两家优质餐厅，或到占地14万平方英尺的“The Heart”零售商场。底层的超级市场应有尽有。

眼看时间还早，你到“绿色园林”周围的一家酒吧小酌两杯，再到滨海湾金沙观赏世界级的精彩演出。

滨海盛景豪苑的生活就是如此，让你体验高档雅居生活，也享有综合式发展项目的便利。

滨海湾高质综合生活

滨海盛景豪苑提供1至4卧房和顶层单位选择，适合单身外籍人士、夫妇或家庭。项目共有1042个单位，每个单位空间宽敞，装饰豪华，厨卫皆用Villeroy & Boch、Miele和Poggenpohl等高档品牌。

所有单位都可饱览漂亮海景或绿色园林。其他设施包括私人用餐厨房、烤肉台和私人会所等。

这里的零售和用餐空间近20万平方英尺，选择包罗万象，有干洗服务、诊所、餐馆、酒吧和咖啡馆等，必能满足住户的各种生活所需。

滨海盛景由德国著名建筑师、绿化建筑权威Ingenhoven Architects操刀，通过革新建筑原理和可持续设计特点，提高项目的舒适和有效性。

项目至今已荣获许多建筑大奖，包括EdgeProp Singapore卓越大奖的顶尖项目卓越大奖（完成项目-中型）和2018新加坡世界不动产联盟（FIACCI Singapore）产业大奖的持续性项目奖项。

无敌的优质地段
滨海盛景豪苑坐落于崭新的滨海湾金融地段，离滨海市区线和滨海快线一步之遥，为滨海市区线、南北线、环岛线和未来的汤申—东海岸线提供无缝衔接。未来也有地下行人道连接滨海盛景豪苑和莱佛士坊与东西线。

附近的主要快速公路有滨海高速公路和东海岸高速公路，可直接通往樟宜机场和圣淘沙。地点邻新加坡著名景点如滨海艺术中心和艺术科学博物馆。

值得一提的是，滨海盛景豪苑是滨海湾唯一一个被两个花园（中央街心公园和Marina Station Square）围绕的发展项目。这两个公园连同项目的“绿色园林”和13米高瀑布，让生活在钢筋水泥中的住户也有机会投入大自然的怀抱。

高增值潜力

滨海盛景拥有188万平方英尺的优质甲级办公楼，在这里设有办公室的国际公司包括Facebook、普华永道（PricewaterhouseCoopers）和英国石油（British Petroleum）。

这些公司驻扎在此，不仅吸引许多本地和海外人才到滨海湾，莱佛士坊和环岛线工作，也刺激了滨海盛景豪苑的租赁需求。

随着市区重建局致力把滨海湾打造成可拥有可持续性城市生活的市中心，滨海盛景豪苑不仅是人们的梦寐家园，也是投资者的理想选择。

欲知更多详情，请浏览marinaone.com.sg/register.html

网络连接

Wi-Fi网状网络 (mesh) 或许可以解决你家中的各种网络连接问题

Get Connected

A mesh Wi-Fi network could put an end to all connectivity problems in your home

BY BRYANT CHAN

The perennial problem of every homeowner is the dead zone: an area where the Wi-Fi signal is intermittent or non-existent.

Imagine watching YouTube on your phone as you lie on your bed, curled in the corner to leverage a single bar of signal.

If this sounds familiar to you, what you probably need is a mesh Wi-Fi set-up.

What is the difference?

How is a mesh Wi-Fi set-up different from a conventional home Internet set-up?

As its name implies, mesh Wi-Fi routers are capable of setting up mesh networks. Rather than having the Wi-Fi signal originate from a single router as with conventional set-ups, a mesh

network consists of multiple (often smaller) wireless nodes that form a Wi-Fi network.

You might be thinking: How is that different from using wireless extenders or repeaters?

A wireless extender takes the signal from your central router and boosts it, but each mesh Wi-Fi node acts as an integral part of the network — transmitting its own Wi-Fi network.

Another bonus: Because they are designed to be placed on counters, tabletops or shelves, mesh Wi-Fi nodes look more aesthetically pleasing, and take up little more space than a coffee cup.

One size fits... most

Ready to get yours? Here are some considerations.

First up: The price. Mesh Wi-Fi networks have been available for some time; Google WiFi was released in

Store or Apple App Store) that greatly simplifies the configuration process, letting you use your smartphone for a quick and easy set-up.

In other words, say goodbye to the days of squatting next to your router with an Ethernet cable the length of your forearm, and tearing your hair out trying to break down a wall of passwords and denied permissions.

Another bonus: Because they are designed to be placed on counters, tabletops or shelves, mesh Wi-Fi nodes look more aesthetically pleasing, and take up little more space than a coffee cup.

Singapore last August but the prices have remained unchanged.

A single node costs \$199 from the official Google Store.

It is also wise to note that mesh Wi-Fi has limited features. The average router has four Ethernet ports, while mesh Wi-Fi nodes typically only have two and often lack features like USB ports that connect to external storage solutions or printers.

Most mesh Wi-Fi solutions also lack advanced options such as support for Dynamic Domain Name System (DNS) or Media Access Control Filtering.

For instance, Dynamic DNS is necessary if you want to host your own website from a server in your home, or if there are files stored on a home server that you need to access remotely.

Finally, mesh Wi-Fi also falls short in terms of connection speed. So if

you download terabytes of data on a regular basis, or absolutely need the lowest possible ping for competitive online gaming, you might want to look elsewhere.

Weigh your priorities

If you prefer your router to have the most advanced feature set, or simply are not willing to shell out the cash, maybe a mesh Wi-Fi solution isn't for you.

However, if you are tired of dealing with needless complex router configurations, or sick of dropped calls and videos having to buffer abruptly when moving from one room to another, prepare to get out your credit card.

Doing so should improve your digital experience and minimise your frustration levels — just expect less beauty sleep as you play games, browse Pinterest or regram stunning photos.

相似 每个屋主都曾经面对“死角”的问题，即家中的某个角落接收不到Wi-Fi信号。想象你正在床上通过手机观看YouTube，但姿势却很不舒服，因为你必须把身体缩到一角，才能收到该处较强的信号。

若上述的情况听起来非常熟悉，那你或许需要网状网络设备。

有什么差别？

一般的家居网络设备和网状网络设备有什么不同？

网状路由器可形成拥有多个无线节点的网状网络，扩大Wi-Fi的覆盖范围，让你无论身在家中何处，都能通过最靠近、信号最强的路由器连网，而不是像传统设置一样，单靠一个路由器。

你或许会问：那网状路由器和无线扩展器或无线中继器的差别在哪？

无线扩展器是从中央路由器取得信号，再加以增强；网状路由器节头则都属于主要网络的一部分，具备传送Wi-Fi的功能。

当信号变弱时，你或许尝试过中断无线网络，再重新连接，尝试获取最强的信号。有了网状网络后，你的电子产品将会根据信号强弱，自动连接最具效率的路由器，过程顺畅无缝。

另外，网状路由器一般都可搭配手机应用程序使用(可从Google Play或Apple App下载)，你可通过手机进行设置，大大简化其过程，非常方便。

换句话说，你再也无需花长时间设置路由器、处理以太网(Ethernet)电缆，又或陷入屡次输入密码，屡次遭拒的恼人情况。

值得一提的是，网状路由器设计美观，可摆放在工作台面或架子上，所占空间也不大。

网状网络并不适合每个人

在购买网状路由器前，应先考虑以下几大因素：

首先是价格。网状网络已流行一阵子，Google WiFi去年8月在本地推出，但价格始终保持不变。

单节点在Google商店的售价为\$199。

网状网络的功能有限。一般路由器有四个Ethernet接口，但网状网络节点一般只有两个，也没有USB接口让用户连接外部储存器或打印机。

大多数的网状网络方案也缺乏网站域名系统(Dynamic DNS)或MAC过滤等先进功能。比如说，若你打算在家中的服务器搭建自己的网站，又或通过远程方式存取家中服务器的文件，那就必须使用网站域名系统。

网状网络的连接速度也有待加强。若你经常要下载大量数据，或因为爱玩网上游戏而需要最低的ping值，那网状网络并不能满足你的要求。

衡量实际需要

如果你希望路由器具备先进功能，或你不愿意花太多钱，那网状网络并不适合你。

如果你讨厌复杂的路由器设置过程，或厌倦了无线服务在接听电话或观看录像时突然中断，那就考虑购买网状路由器吧。

从此，你将可享有更优质的数码体验——当然，这也表示你会睡得更少，因为你将忙着玩游戏、浏览Pinterest或与朋友分享漂亮的照片！



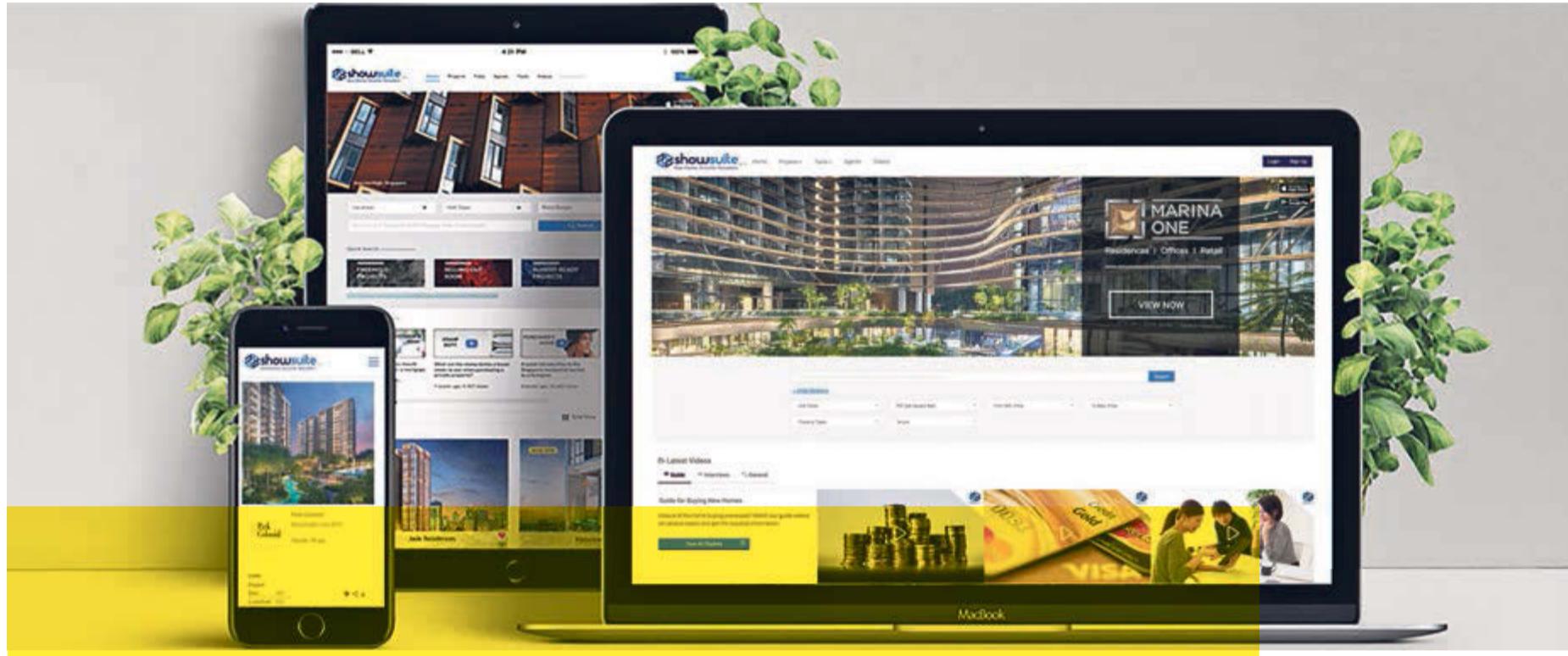


PHOTO: SHOWSUITE

Home sales platform paves way for paperless transactions

Showsuite uses 3D and other technology to save agents and developers from using thousands of sheets of paper

BY YUNITA ONG

The home-sales platform Showsuite has launched Singapore's first fully digitalised sales-booking platform, which could save developers and property agents hundreds of thousands of sheets of paper during the sales process for one project alone.

The digital platform enables developers' agents to transact on their iPads "anytime and anywhere", said Mr Karamjit Singh, the chief executive officer of the proptech start-up, which debuted in November 2017.

"The user interface is designed as though an agent is booking a cinema ticket on behalf of the buyer he or she is serving. To home buyers, it means better convenience and a smoother buying journey, aside from reduced waiting time."

Showsuite uses 3D technology, virtual reality and other technology to digitalise information about new projects and unsold units, so that property agents and home buyers can visualise and experience their purchase when they buy off-plan.

It is also environmentally friendly. Mr Singh estimated if a manual paper-based booking system is used, a housing project with 750 units

would require over 300,000 sheets of paper, including copies required for the different parties involved in the sale.

"That's equivalent to about 36 trees being destroyed. This can now be a thing of the past," he added.

Park Colonial, the Woodleigh project developed by CEL Development, Heeton Holdings and KSH Holdings, was the first to use Showsuite's digital booking engine. Since early August, close to 100 sales have been made on it.

Ms Joanne Goh, the general manager of marketing at CEL Development, said: "As we look to improve productivity and streamline internal processes, we are keen to improve the buying journey for both our agents and home buyers. Hence we are delighted to partner with Showsuite to deliver all of this, as we go paperless in our support of the environment."

Roxy-Pacific's Arena Residences, which began sales on Nov 2, is also making use of Showsuite.

Mr Singh said that this paperless transaction portal would bring the industry closer to meeting the objectives listed in the Singapore Government's Real Estate Industry Transformation Map.

This article first appeared in The Business Times on November 2, 2018.

房屋销售平台为无纸张交易铺路

Showsuite应用三维及其他先进技术，让发展商和房屋经纪在卖屋过程中免用纸张，更加环保。

本地首个全面数码化的房屋销售与预订平台 Showsuite，发展商和房屋经纪在整个交易过程中无需用到纸张，一个公寓项目从开盘到售罄，能省下数以十万计的纸张。

Showsuite于2017年11月开始投入服务，其公司总裁Karamjit Singh说，有了这个数码平台，发展商的指定销售团队便可“随时随地”通过iPad进行交易。

“这个平台用户界面容易使用，犹如经纪代买家订购戏票一样，对买家而言，这不仅缩短了等候时间，整个买房程序也更简便、顺畅。”

Showsuite结合三维模型和虚拟实境（virtual reality）科技，将新售楼盘和未出售单位的信息数码化，买家无需亲临示范单位，也可从屏幕上“参观”和“体验”公寓的格局和设施。

除此之外，这个平台也比较环保。Karamjit Singh预计，一个拥有750个单位的项目若采用传统的书面订购系统，将需要逾30万张纸。

“这相等于36棵树被砍伐，但是Showsuite平台将让这一切成为历史。”

由CEL Development、喜敦控股（Heeton Holdings）和金成兴控股（KSH Holdings）联合发展、位于兀里的英雅苑（Park Colonial）是首个采用 Showsuite平台的项目。自8月初以来，已通过该平台完成近100宗交易。

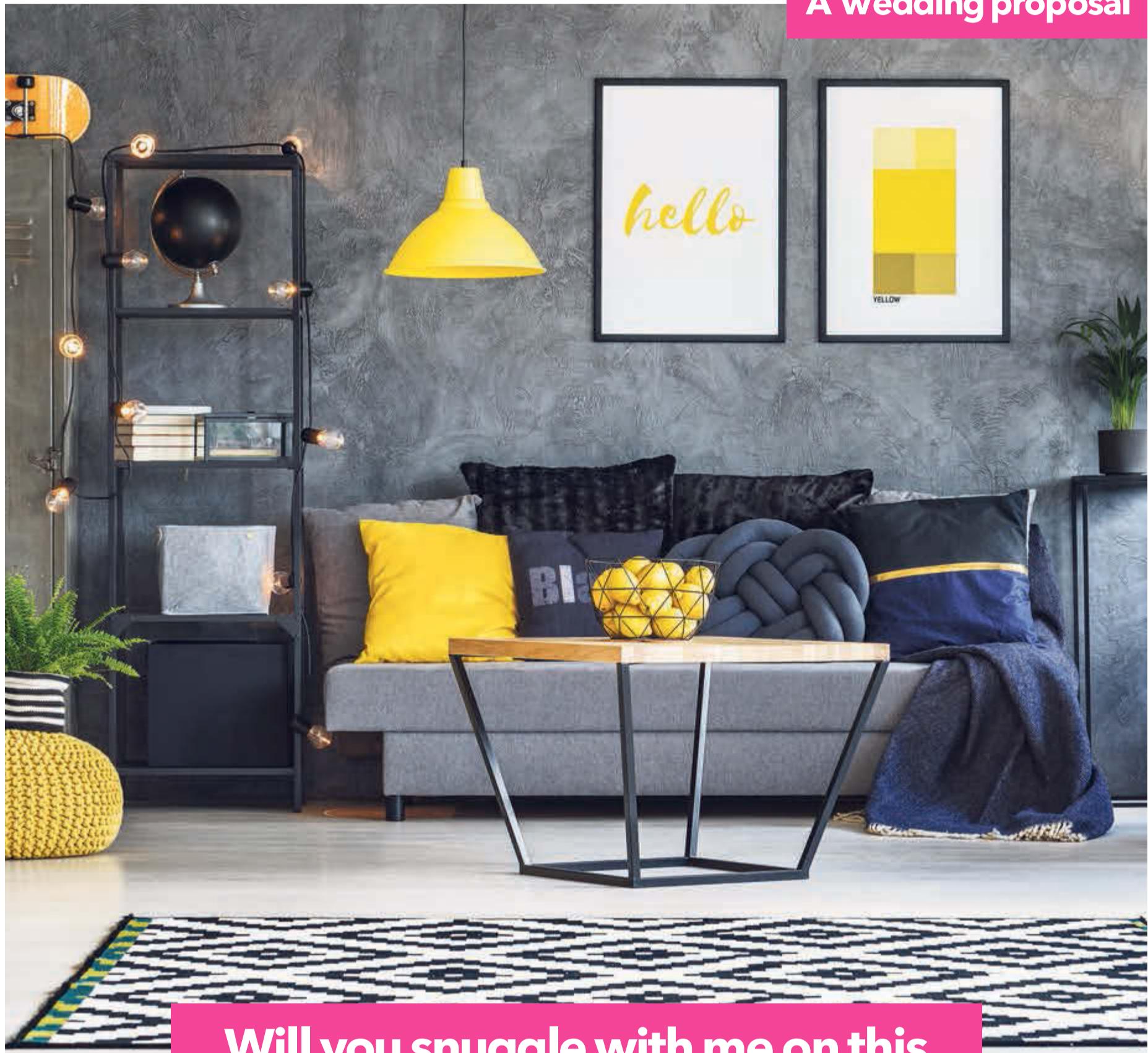
CEL Development营销总经理Joanna Goh说：“为了提高生产率及简化内部程序，我们积极改善经纪和买家的购房体验，因此非常高兴能和Showsuite合作，推行无纸化交易，为保护环境尽力。”

乐斯太平洋（Roxy Pacific）发展的Arena Residences也采用Showsuite平台，已于11月2日开盘。

Karamjit Singh表示，这个无纸化的交易平台将让房地产行业向落实房地产业转型蓝图所设定的目标更进一步。

译自2018年11月2日刊登于商业时报的 Home-sales platform paves way for paperless transactions.

A wedding proposal



**Will you snuggle with me on this
couch for the rest of our lives?**



Statement features

Old-world grandeur makes a comeback with dramatic statement features such as ceilings, which give any space a truly opulent feel. If huge chandeliers and hand-painted murals are not quite what you have in mind, perhaps consider larger-than-life features such as recessed grooves with cleverly hidden light bars, printed wallpaper or even a cluster of huge ceiling lamps as a centrepiece.

Cuba, MyWall wallpaper
\$107 per roll, Goodrich Global
<https://www.goodrichglobal.com/singapore> | Tel: 6788-6868

特色天花板设计

散发旧时高贵奢华的夸张天花板设计将卷土重来，让空间尽显贵族气息。倘若豪华水晶吊灯、手绘壁画不是你所钟情的，不妨考虑融入一些较夸张的设计元素，如能巧妙隐藏灯条的凹槽、墙纸或结合大型吊灯的核心装饰等。

Bohemian rhapsody

The Bohemian trend has only one rule — there is no such thing as too much. The trend has its roots in the group of nomads who led artistic and unconventional lives after the French Revolution. Embody that same free spirit by throwing together clashing patterns, mixing up different textures and not shying away from handmade items. It takes no time at all, especially if you already have what you need.

Rosello Green 20x20-inch pillow cover, \$105.95, Crate & Barrel at Orchard Gateway@Emerald
Tel: 6634-8488

波希米亚狂想曲

所谓的波希米亚装修风格，只需遵循一个规则—即“只怕不够，不怕过多”。源自于法国大革命后的游牧民族，充满艺术气息和超脱传统是波希米亚风格的特色。无论是混搭冲撞的花纹图案、质感不同的材质、美观实用的手做物品，皆能充分体现波希米亚风格，丝毫不费吹灰之力。



PHOTOS: CRATE & BARREL, GOODRICH GLOBAL, SPACE FURNITURE, CASTLERY, LUX LUMENS



今年流行什么？

2019年的5大家居装潢新趋势。

trends to try in 2019

What's in store for home decorating this year?



Tectonic tables

Possibly the newest trend on this list, tectonic tables are ideal for small spaces and usually come in threes. Group them together or split them up — these versatile tables allow you to play with different configurations to suit your practical needs or your aesthetic preferences.

Ilda coffee table, price available upon request, Space Furniture at 77 Bencoolen Street
Tel: 6415-0000

组合式桌子

组合式桌子适用于小巧的空间，一般以三张为一组，可一起或独立使用，让你根据个人爱好或实际需求，灵活配置。



Geometric patterns

As time passes, old trends return with a new twist — cue geometric designs with their perfect mix of structure and creativity. These invaded every wall in the 1970s and 80s, and are now returning in a subtler fashion. Perfect for those who want some order in their life, yet like to live a little dangerously. Give your functional kitchen a splash of personality with geometric tiles, placemats or even lights.

Minimalist geometric lines pendant light, \$59, Lux Lumens lux-lumens.sg

几何图案

时间不断更替，潮流周而复始，完美结合结构与创意的几何图案便是其中之一。它们曾在上世纪70、80年代占据数不清的墙面，如今再次悄然回归，最适合那些想在平凡中寻找不平凡者。采用融合了几何图案的瓷砖、垫子或灯饰，将为功能型厨房注入你的个人风格。

Up your 'gram game

Clueless about decorating? Get up to speed with the art of creating stylish, liveable spaces when you #follow these accounts

看网红如何 装扮家居

现在就跟随这些Instagram红人，掌握最新的家居装潢贴士。

@dabito

Number of followers: 157,000

Style: Bohemian chic

Specialty: Kitsch options

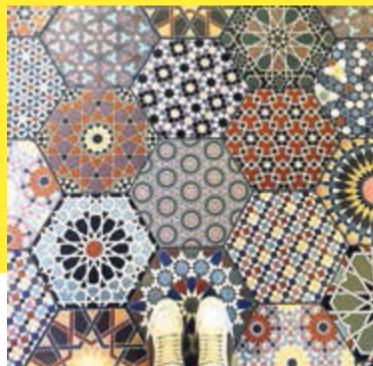
Selling point: On top of being a savvy photoblogger and designer, Dabito runs OldBrandNew, a creative store that sells all things bohemian. The shop stocks all sorts of items—from lights and pillows to rugs. Get design ideas on how to furnish your space with them here.

跟随者：157,000人

风格：波希米亚风

专长：矫饰过纵

卖点：Dabito不仅是知名的摄影博客和设计师，也经营网店OldBrandNew，专卖波希米亚风的家居饰品，如灯具、枕头、毯子等等。不妨参考这里提供的装潢点子。



@ihavethis thingwithtiles

Number of followers: 111,000

Style: Fixtures

Specialty: Tiles

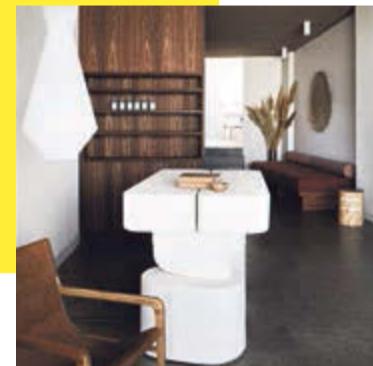
Selling point: Looking for a counter backsplash, foyer entrance or bathroom wall that looks nothing like what anyone has? This is the account for you. The options are virtually endless, as you consider geometrics, florals, motifs, or even a mural of an Italian cafe. Warning: Be prepared to lose sleep as you scroll through eye-catching options that will have you hankering for a home makeover.

跟随者：111,000人

风格：固定装置

专长：瓷砖

卖点：想打造别具一格的柜台后挡板、玄关入口或浴室墙壁？那就别错过这个Instagram帐号。无论是几何图案、花卉、花纹或是意大利咖啡馆的壁画，这里的选择应有尽有。



@thejungalow

Number of followers: 1.1 million

Style: Green

Specialty: Indoor plants ranging from succulents to mini trees

Selling point: An online shop, lifestyle brand and blog, the fact that this account is followed by other popular handles such as @plantannaplant and @leaf_haus is testament to its appeal. Find out how to dress your home with foliage (six-foot-tall fiddle leaf fig, anyone?), inspired by the efforts of plant parents the world over.

跟随者：110万人

风格：绿景

专长：室内植物

卖点：这是个结合网店、品牌和部落格三合一的帐号，跟随者包括著名的@plantannaplant和@leaf_haus。向全球各地的植物爱好者讨教，如何利用了绿色植物美化家居（谁想摆棵6尺高的琴叶榕？）。

@thedesignchaser

Number of followers: 218,000

Style: Scandinavian

Specialty: Simple aesthetics

Selling point: Where clean lines and white frames tend to make interiors look stark, Michelle Halford is adept at adding a cosier feel to interiors. Spot cool accents in her posts such as brass lamps and quirky bird statues.

跟随者：218,000人

风格：斯堪的纳维亚

专长：雅静纯洁

卖点：利落的线条和素雅的色调或许让人觉得单调乏味，但Michelle Halford最拿手的是让简单瞬间升华。不妨参考贴文中出现的铜灯、怪趣的飞禽雕像等。



PHOTOS: ISTOCK



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Artist's Impression
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- Minutes' drive to Singapore Expo, Changi Business Park and Changi Airport (Jewel Changi Airport opens in 2019)
开车前往新加坡博览中心、樟宜商业园及樟宜机场(星耀樟宜将于2019年启用)，只需短短数分钟
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Developed by:
发展商:



TRIPARTITE
Developers Pte. Limited
(Co. Reg. No.: 196800485K)

Holding Company:
控股公司:

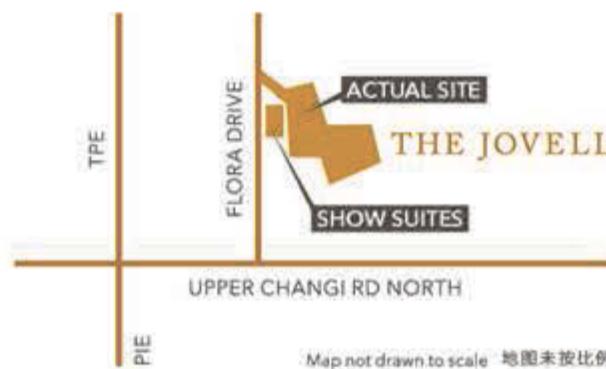


HONG LEONG
HOLDINGS LIMITED
豐隆實業有限公司
(Co. Reg. No.: 196800290Z)

Provision of shuttle bus service to nearby MRT station for a period of 1 year, commencing within 6 months from TOP. Developer's conditions apply.

在领取临时入伙证 (TOP) 的半年内，将提供为期一年的短程巴士服务往返附近的地铁站。附带条件。

Developer: Tripartite Developers Pte. Limited (Co. Reg. No. 196800485K) • Developer's Licence No.: C1266 • Tenure of Land: Leasehold (99 Years lease commencing from 8 March 2018) • Encumbrances: Nil • Date of Notice of Vacant Possession under the S&P Agreement: No later than 1 August 2023 • Expected Date of Legal Completion: No later than 1 August 2026 or 3 years after the Date of Delivery of Vacant Possession, whichever is the earlier • Location & Lot No.: Lots MK31-20W & MK31-4822T at Flora Drive



Map not drawn to scale 地图未按比例

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- Enjoy a location that surrounds you with lifestyle, shopping and F&B establishments
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- Stay connected with a comprehensive transport network and major expressways close by
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Artist's Impression
艺术家笔触

* Terms and Conditions apply. 附带条件

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EXPECTED DATE OF VACANT POSSESSION: 1 AUG 2023 • EXPECTED DATE OF LEGAL COMPLETION: 1 AUG 2024 • ENCUMBRANCES: MORTGAGE REGISTERED IN FAVOUR OF OVERSEA-CHINESE BANKING CORPORATION LIMITED

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Insurance firm aims for regional growth and wealth management



Photo: iStock

By SIEW LI SEN

China Taiping Insurance Singapore has launched its life insurance business here citing the significant market for savings, retirement and protection products fuelled by increasing wealth in the Asia-Pacific.

Owned by China's fourth largest life insurer, China Taiping Insurance Singapore got its licence from the Monetary Authority of Singapore as a

composite insurer to carry on life insurance and general insurance business last August.

The firm was originally the Tai Ping Insurance Singapore Branch, which was established in Singapore in 1938 to do general insurance business with main lines of business in motor, construction and marine insurance.

Following an injection of \$40 million to support the life insurance business last year, the Singapore firm has a paid-up capital of about \$200 million.

Mr Yang Yamei, general manager, China Taiping Insurance Singapore, said: "The inauguration of its life insurance business in Singapore is part of the

group's overseas expansion strategy to diversify the revenue and income streams and achieve growth beyond its existing markets.

Singapore also offers good access to the region and offshore clients, said Mr Lance Tay, general manager, life insurance, China Taiping Insurance Singapore.

In 2016, there were 2.6 million millionaires in the Asia-Pacific, excluding Japan, with 110,000 in Singapore, according to a Capgemini wealth report.

The total wealth of the millionaires was estimated to be US\$11.8 trillion (\$16 trillion) with cash making up 21 per cent or about \$2.3 trillion, the report said.

"Demand for quality protection and wealth management solutions is

underpinned by the strong wealth creation and rapidly ageing population in Singapore," said Mr Tay.

This surge in demand is attributed to the country's changing demographics, he said.

The proportion of the population aged 60 and above has increased to 23 per cent in 2018, which has more than doubled since 2000.

The trend is expected to continue with this senior group making up 38 per cent of the population by 2050.

In 30 years, with decreasing birth rate and improving life expectancy, Singapore will have more people in the older age groups than the younger ones.

Mr Tay also noted that savings are growing at a slower rate than gross national income.

Official data showed that from 2010 to 2017, gross national income grew 35 per cent, faster than the 25 per cent for gross national saving in the same period.

China Taiping will start its life insurance business in Singapore with two products.

It will distribute them via financial advisory firms and banks and international brokers.

The two products are savings plans for the short to medium term.

The firm has about 140 staff in Singapore including 40 in the life team. Mr Tay said the life team will expand to 50 in 12 months.

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in The Business Times on Jan 9, 2019.

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WALK-IN INTERVIEWS

16 JAN InfoComm Technology Sector

1pm - 4pm
WSG Careers Connect (WCC)
900 South Woodlands Drive, #06-14,
Singapore 730900

Participating Employer:
D L Resources Pte Ltd
Position Available:
Analyst Programmer

17 JAN F&B and Food Manufacturing Sectors

1pm - 4pm
WSG Careers Connect (WCC)
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Participating Employer:
Cocoba Pte Ltd • The Soup Spoon Pte Ltd

Positions Available:
Assistant Technician • Baker • Kitchen Assistant • Kitchen Crew • QC Inspector • Service Crew

Register now: <http://bit.ly/sgjobs0119c>

WORKSHOPS

30 JAN Career e-Search

2pm – 5pm
Lifelong Learning Institute
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ASEAN+3 MACROECONOMIC RESEARCH OFFICE (AMRO), an international organization with full legal personality, located in Singapore, is a regional macroeconomic surveillance organization that aims to contribute to securing the macroeconomic and financial stability in the ASEAN+3 region. AMRO's vision is to be an independent, credible and professional regional organization acting as a trusted policy advisor to members in the ASEAN+3 region, which includes 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and China; Hong Kong, China; Japan; and Korea. To fulfil its mandate, AMRO focuses on three core functions: conducting macroeconomic surveillance, supporting the implementation of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), and providing technical assistance to members.

AMRO is currently looking for the position of Director, to start work in AMRO from May 2019.

DIRECTOR

The responsibility of the AMRO Director is to head this regional surveillance organization to ensure efficient and timely surveillance of ASEAN+3 countries during both peace and crisis time.

For full details of the Terms of Reference and Qualification Criteria, please refer to:
AMRO career website: <http://www.amro-asia.org/career/>
or Charterhouse job portal: <https://www.charterhouse.com.sg/job/director/>

Qualified candidates should send (a) CV, (b) brief description on the relevant working experiences, and (c) earliest possible starting date of employment at AMRO, to: **AMRO_Director@charterhouse.com.sg** by **6 February 2019**.

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CAREERS IN ENGINEERING

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Pushing through

LTA engineer Wong Kah Chou reveals the complexity that lies behind the construction of each underground train tunnel

BY CHARMAINE CHAN

As a country struggling with land scarcity, Singapore has built upwards (skyscrapers) and outwards (land reclamation).

Today, the focus is shifting to building downwards, with a master plan mapping out the island's subterranean spaces to be unveiled later this year.

As our city gears up to go underground, tunnels have never been more crucial. Yet, at the same time, they represent one of the most complex feats of civil engineering.

And no one understands this better than Mr Wong Kah Chou (right), senior project engineer (tunnelling) with the Land Transport Authority (LTA).

"To construct tunnels within the built-up urban environment in Singapore presents a set of unique challenges," says the 30-year-old.

"They have to pass under or in close proximity to existing roads, above ground structures and also underground infrastructures."

He takes great pride in ensuring there is as little disruption as possible to the public as the work is taking place.

He recounts operations done at night to minimise disturbance and describes the work of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) as "happening around the clock silently under the ground away from most of our eyes".

Tunnel specialist

In his five years with LTA, Mr Wong has become something of a tunnel specialist, building underground passages for the Fort Canning and Bencoolen stations on the Downtown Line.



PHOTO: TED CHEN

His work currently involves the Marine Parade station and the tunnels to the Marine Terrace and Tanjong Katong stations on the Thomson-East Coast Line. And it is this most recent project that presented him with a different kind of problem — specifically the geology of the area, which is made up mainly of marine clay.

This makes the disposal of the soil (called "muck") dug out of the earth by the TBM more challenging as marine clay is sticky and unstable.

Traditionally, muck car systems would haul muck to a pit at the surface.

But this project required the installation of a muck-pumping system (where the muck is transported via a pipeline) for the entire tunnel drive — the first time LTA has done so in Singapore.

Mr Wong thrives on the fact that every tunnelling project is different and comes with its own unique obstacles.

"They vary — from engineering technical issues to project and resource management challenges to managing various stakeholders. Tackling them has allowed me to develop professionally," he says.

At the end of the day, Mr Wong knows that he is in the best place to indulge his passion for tunnels, a passion discovered while he was in his final year at Nanyang Technological University studying civil engineering.

"Due to the sheer scale of its rail projects, LTA offers one of the best places in terms of project management for tunnelling and underground construction," he says. "There is such a great sense of satisfaction being part of developing the transportation network for the nation, a network that benefits the people of Singapore."

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If you're looking for a career that offers you a chance to make a mark on Singapore's rapidly changing land transport landscape, welcome aboard. To find out more about careers at LTA, visit www.lta.gov.sg/careers or www.careers.gov.sg

"During my internship at LTA, I found the work challenging and exciting, with no two days alike. That's why I decided to join LTA. I get a sense of satisfaction when I board the trains whose construction and testing I had been part of. I feel that my work has a significant impact on the numerous people who ride the trains each day."

Shaun Ng
 Executive Project Engineer,
 Rolling Stock Projects

"The most rewarding part of my job is the opportunity to experience and learn at various stages of the project, from conception to completion. Being highly involved gives me a great sense of ownership over the project and an even greater sense of satisfaction on seeing its successful completion."

Isabella Yeo
 Deputy Project Manager,
 Tunnelling

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Job Requirements:

- Possess at least a Diploma in Mechatronics/Mechanical/Electrical Engineering or equivalent
- WSQ ACTA and/or DACE and teaching experience would be an added advantage
- Minimum 2 years of working experience in Mechanical, Electrical, Refrigeration and Air conditioning
- Proven teaching experience in related field
- Knowledge/proficiency in Microsoft Office Applications

TEACHER - RETAIL SERVICES

Job Description:
Ability to teach retail-related modules and effectively engage students in learning E.g. Retail Operations, Merchandise Display, Customer Service and Point-of-Sale Operations

Job Requirements:

- Possess a recognized Diploma or Degree
- WSQ ACTA and/or DACE and teaching experience would be an added advantage
- Minimum 2 years of operational and/or merchandising experience in a retail service related environment

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Email completed application with supporting documents to NLS_Career@ite.edu.sg by 25 Jan 2019.

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- Conduct audits including quality management systems especially in the construction sector;
- Conduct internal & external training

2. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AUDITOR

Requirements:

- Min. Diploma/Degree in Engineering (Preferably in Civil & Structural), occupational safety, occupational health or occupational hygiene;
- Min. 5-8 years working/ practical experience in relevant fields from the date of registration as WSH Officer;
- At least 5 years of experience in the participation of auditing activities;
- Preferably completed the Graduate Certificate in WSH under the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualification (WSQ) Framework for WSH Professionals (Level "D")

Responsibilities:

- Conduct audits including SS506/ISO45001 management systems especially in the construction sector;
- Conduct internal & external training

Interested applicants are invited to EMAIL your resume with current, expected salary and a recent passport-size photograph to: certints.acchre@yahoo.com.sg / jennyang@socotec.com

SCHAFFNER shaping electrical power

Service Engineer

The candidate will ensure after sales service for the company's power quality products. Responsibilities include technical support, onsite interventions, repairs/analysis, spare part management, service documentation, and supporting service partners.

To be successful in this position, you must be:

- Singaporean Preferred
- Polytechnic Diploma in Engineering (Power Electronics)
- Some years relevant experience preferred
- Energetic and willing to travel within Asia Pacific
- Fair command of written and spoken English

If you believe you have what it takes, please write in with CV to HR at: Schaffner EMC Pte Ltd, 3015A Ubi Road 1, #05-09, Singapore 408705

St Joseph's Institution International

SJI International is a Catholic and Lasallian school that provides a holistic, international education in Singapore. We are looking to recruit top-quality teachers for the following positions:

High School Teachers

- * Coordinator of Wellbeing Education
- * Science Teacher (Grade 7 & 8 / Sec 1 & 2)
- * History Teacher
- * Learning Support Teacher
- * English Teacher (Only Singaporeans need apply)

[All teacher applications MUST be made through Schrole – see webpage below for details]

For further details, please visit the following link:
https://www.sji-international.com.sg/about_us/employment

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Call 6289 8822 or e-mail notices@sph.com.sg to book your AGM & EGM, Auction & Tender, Financial Statement, IPO, Merger & Acquisition or Move to Mainboard notices.

NOTICES

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

A GUIDE TO CLEANING
Start the new year on a fresh note

TEL AVIV FOR FOODIES
Tuck into a diverse dining scene

SPOTLIGHT ON HOTPOT
How it came about and where to go

Don't miss this week's issue



*Our guests are planning their stay.
Your finest Singapore hospitality team
is being assembled.*

*We are selecting dedicated and passionate talents for our opening team.
Career development opportunities await you.*

ROOMS

Lobby Ambassador
Assistant Head Butler
Butler
Assistant Head Concierge
Concierge
Doorman
Porter
Chauffeur

HOUSEKEEPING

Assistant Executive
Housekeeper
Assistant Manager
Supervisor
Room Attendant
Public Area Attendant
Laundry Attendant
Runner

FLORAL BOUTIQUE

Florist

SPA

Assistant Manager
Receptionist
Therapist
Attendant

SECURITY

Operations Officer
Senior Security Officer
Security Officer

ENGINEERING

Maintenance Officer
Senior Operations Technician
Operations Technician

CULINARY

Culinary Coordinator
Sous Chef (Chinese Banquet)
Chef Baker
Chef de Partie
Commis I
Kitchen Helper
Assistant Executive Steward
Steward Supervisor
Steward Attendant

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE

Bar Manager
Chinese Restaurant Manager
Assistant Outlet Manager
Service Executive
Service Associate
Host / Hostess
Food Runner
Sommelier
Commis Sommelier
Associate Sommelier
Assistant Head Bartender
Mixologist
Resident Bartender

RAFFLES GIFT SHOP

Retail Leader
Retail Associate

REVENUE / CALL CENTRE

Revenue Analyst
Executive
Agent

FINANCE

Senior Accounts Assistant
Receiving / Store
Officer
Receiving / Store
Assistant

SALES & MARKETING

Sales Manager
(Corporate and Leisure)
Assistant Sales Manager
(Corporate)
Sales Coordinator
Events Executive
Marketing
Communications
Manager
Marketing
Communications
Executive

RECRUITMENT FAIR

Monday, 14 January 2019

8.00 am to 8.00 pm

Atrium Ballroom, Raffles City Convention Centre Level 4

Candidates are invited to walk-in for an interview or apply through www.raffles.com/careers.
Shortlisted applicants will be notified. We invite local candidates to apply.

Be part of our new Raffles story...



1 Beach Road, Singapore 189673 +65 6337 1886 singapore@raffles.com raffles.com/singapore

A large, abstract illustration of fireworks exploding against a dark blue background. The fireworks are composed of various colors including red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple, with many small dots and lines radiating outwards to represent the burst of light. The overall effect is a festive and celebratory atmosphere.

Let ST Classifieds
light up your new year
in different ways

ST Classifieds
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Be a part of an Evolving Mediascape

Incorporated in 1984, main board-listed Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH) is Asia's leading media organisation, engaging minds and enriching lives across multiple languages and platforms.

SPH's core business is publishing of newspapers, magazines and books in both print and digital editions. It also owns other digital products, online classifieds, radio stations and outdoor media.

On the property front, SPH owns 70% in a real estate investment trust called SPH REIT which comprises Paragon, a premier upscale retail mall and medical suite/office property in Orchard Road and The Clementi Mall, a mid-market suburban mall.

SPH also owns and operates The Seletar Mall. It built an upmarket residential condominium, Sky@eleven, at Thomson Road, and is developing a new commercial cum residential site at Woodleigh Road. It also has a stake in Chinatown Point.

It is in the aged care sector and owns Orange Valley, Singapore's largest private nursing home operator.

SPH runs a regional events and conferences arm, and a chain of Buzz retail outlets. It also invested in the education business.

For more information, please visit www.sph.com.sg

We invite you to be part of this team and join us as:

1) MARKETING EXECUTIVE (CHINESE PUBLICATIONS SUBSCRIPTIONS)

The Job

- The incumbent will be responsible for planning marketing strategies for SPH publications, namely Lianhe Wanbao and Shin Min Daily News.
- Strategize and execute above-the-line and below-the-line marketing campaigns.
- Provide analysis and reports on post-campaign results.
- Build and manage relations with internal stakeholders as well as external partners, such as retail chain and channel partners, sponsors and others.
- Produce concepts for creative artwork, and run effective publicity across traditional and digital media.
- Plan and execute subscription events according to requirements, target audience and objectives.
- Come up with suggestions to enhance the campaign's success
- Prepare budgets and ensure adherence
- Source and negotiate with vendors and suppliers
- Coordinate all operations
- Lead promotional activities for the event

Requirements

- Bachelor's Degree
- Experience in marketing and FMCG retail chain related industries are a plus.
- Possess a good understanding of customer behavior and segmentation in B2B and B2C sector
- Proficient with Excel, Word, PowerPoint.
- Have prior experience with digital media platforms that includes results monitoring
- Need to be fluent in Chinese (both spoken and written)
- Self-disciplined and motivated, with strong time and project management skills.
- Strategic thinker with strong analytical, problem solving and communication skills.
- This is a hands-on role requiring a great deal of independence, maturity and commercial mindedness.

2) MANAGER / ASSISTANT MANAGER, STRATEGIC PLANNING

We are looking for a strategic planner to join our robust Strategy team within Integrated Marketing division in SPH focusing on media and advertising. You will be involved in helping the division design a path to growth and profitability in an established pioneer media company that owns multiple media platforms.

The role of the Strategic Planning Manager is to derive insights from internal and external data to help identify key opportunities and develop scenario analysis and action plans. We do expect you to be well-versed in both digital and non-digital media channels across the world of TV, print, digital, radio, out-of-home, and other touch-points. You must like both the art and science of media; and can work with numbers and data to derive great strategies and stories. We invite you to learn more about this dynamic, cerebral career opportunity. If you believe you fit the DNA of the person we want, contact us now.

The Job:

- The position is a strategy role supporting advertising sales at SPH
- Key scope includes supporting SPH, integrated marketing division (IMD) to develop, evolve and/or design a path to growth and profitability amidst competition and constant change.
- Responsibilities include :-
- Gathering and analyzing industry information and internal business plans to spot opportunities and identify action plans
- Track competitive trends, develop scenario analysis
- Develop analysis into presentations; with presentation to senior management

- Participate in ideation and brainstorming with Sales, product teams, newsroom and external vendors/partners to develop partnerships or media directions with the goal of business growth.

This role will require the individual to have:-

- At least 3-4 years of relevant working experience
- Strong media knowledge across online and offline media
- Good media planning capabilities and ability to provide evaluation and strategy based on insights (Consumer, Media, Competitive status etc)
- Understands marketing and advertising principles with focus on customers, markets and technologies will be a plus
- Ability to conduct desk-top research where necessary to understand market landscape
- Ability to work on several projects at the same time, often with different product owners.
- Ability to liaise with multiple parties across SPH such as Product Innovation & Pricing, Newsroom & Sales

Requirements

- Knowledge of Nielsen Media Index, Adquest and/or Radio Adviser/ eRam and ComScore will be a plus
- Good command of MS Office including Excel, Powerpoint and Word.
- Strong number sense and meticulous in data details will be key in succeeding in this role
- Degree in Marketing or Advertising
- Ability to present

3) ADVERTISING SALES ACCOUNT MANAGER/EXECUTIVE (INTEGRATED MEDIA SOLUTIONS)

The Job

You will work closely with advertising agencies and advertisers to sell media solutions and promote SPH various media platforms, ranging from print, digital, radio and out-of-home media to various businesses. You will also develop and execute projects aimed at developing new businesses, building business volume and reinforcing our products in the market place. This is a hunter role. You will be expected to meet monthly sales targets.

Requirements

- A degree in Marketing or Business
- Minimum 2 years of marketing and sales experience preferably in media advertising
- Effectively bilingual
- Ability to conceptualise, strategise, present and execute creative ideas
- Outgoing, resourceful and self-motivated
- Excellent interpersonal and presentation skills
- Ability to work in a dynamic and fast paced environment
- Proficient with Excel and Powerpoint

4) BRAND CONTENT EDITOR/WRITER/PROJECT LEAD

Sweet is a full-service Creative and Content Agency that also provides ROI Services. A recently integrated business unit bringing together Brand New Media, Content Lab, Creative Lab and Think, Sweet is fully owned by SPH and managed by an experienced and dynamic Leadership Team. Sweet will deliver a world-class service for clients, featuring a superstar team of strategists, creators, writers, designers and producers, and backed by SPH's deep consumer insights and access to audiences across multiple media platforms.

The Job

- Oversee, edit and write on-brand and compelling copy across sectors.
- Create and craft content across various formats for print, digital, social, audio and other platforms.
- Strategise execution of innovative content strategies across digital and social media channels.
- Conceptualise campaigns that deliver client messages effectively, and that resonate with the desired audiences.
- Work with internal stakeholders and clients to develop pitches and brand content campaigns.
- Work closely with client, internal stakeholders and other content creators to ensure timely and effective delivery of campaigns following platform best practices.
- Collaborate with Sales, design, tech and campaign teams to ensure content meets client objectives.
- Push for creative and innovative ways of storytelling across platforms. Monitor trends in the digital media landscape.
- Optimise campaigns through use of audience insights, data and performance analysis.
- Manage and lead small teams, develop talent and mentor junior content creators.
- Manage freelance writers to ensure copy meets guidelines, is on-brand and delivered on time.
- Manage projects from start to end

Requirements

- At least five years of working in a newsroom, producing both print and digital content.
- Versatile journalist who has covered a range of beats. Knowledge of business, finance, policy and medical/health sectors a plus.
- Curious, well-read and informed. Able to engage on an intellectual level, but write clearly, succinctly and simply.
- Has excellent editing and copy-editing skills.

- Accurate, meticulous, has good editorial judgment and understanding of copyright/libel/media laws and sensitivities.
- Able to think visually: Have good photo sense, understand how to break content down into digestible parts through stories, graphics, photos, video and other visuals.
- Able to think digital and social to create compelling narratives.
- Able to multitask and adapt role to specific project needs.
- Experience in project management.
- Is a keen observer of media developments and can adapt quickly to rapid changes in the digital and social landscape.
- Ability to use data and insights a plus.
- Efficient, organised, able to meet tight deadlines and work on multiple projects at any time.
- Strong communicator and team player who can work well with other stakeholders.

5) MANAGER/ASSISTANT MANAGER, CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS & CSR

The Job

The Corporate Communications & CSR Division of SPH leads the development and implementation of strategic communication plans in line with the company's corporate goals and business objectives. It also drives SPH's corporate social responsibility initiatives, including supporting the SPH Foundation and helming the Staff Volunteers Club.

This position is ideal for a creative, energetic, and outgoing individual with a passion for a whole range of corporate communications functions. As a member of the dynamic team, the successful candidate will play an important role in managing the company's corporate identity and branding, crafting internal and external communication materials such as media releases, annual report, and stories in our staff newsletters, as well as engaging in media and public relations.

In addition, he/she will also be involved in the organising, co-ordinating and hosting of a variety of corporate events, including facilitating visits to the company's headquarters and other operating centres.

If you thrive on variety and challenge in an exciting environment, this job is for you.

Requirements

- Degree in Mass Communications/Arts or other relevant fields
- 4 years of relevant work experience in journalism, marketing, branding or public relations
- Good spoken and written English is a prerequisite
- Proficiency in a second language is an advantage
- Good understanding of online and social media tools and trends
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Confident, mature, resourceful and able to work independently

Interested applicants, please email resume to sphtalent@sph.com.sg (for positions 1 to 5)

6) ENGINEER (BASED AT SPH PRINT CENTRE, 2 JURONG PORT ROAD)

The Job

Reporting to the Engineering Manager, this position is responsible for planning/overseeing projects, and machinery maintenance/troubleshooting.

Requirements

- A Degree in Electrical/Electronic, Mechanical Engineering or its equivalent
- Strong leadership and problem solving skills
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Able to work in a fast paced environment
- Able to work on rotating shifts

7) EXECUTIVE / SENIOR EXECUTIVE (OPERATIONS) (BASED AT SPH PRINT CENTRE, 2 JURONG PORT ROAD)

The Job

Reporting to the Production Manager, this position is responsible for the planning / supervision of newspaper printing operations and establishing new operation techniques to produce new print products. Selected candidates will work on traditional offset printing machinery as well as latest digital press capable of producing variable print products.

Requirements

- A Degree in Engineering or Manufacturing
- Technical knowledge with man-management skills to ensure maximum system efficiency
- Innovative to establish alternative working methods
- Able to work on rotating shifts

Interested applicants, please email resume to hropsprd@sph.com.sg (for positions 6 to 7)

(Only shortlisted candidates will be notified)